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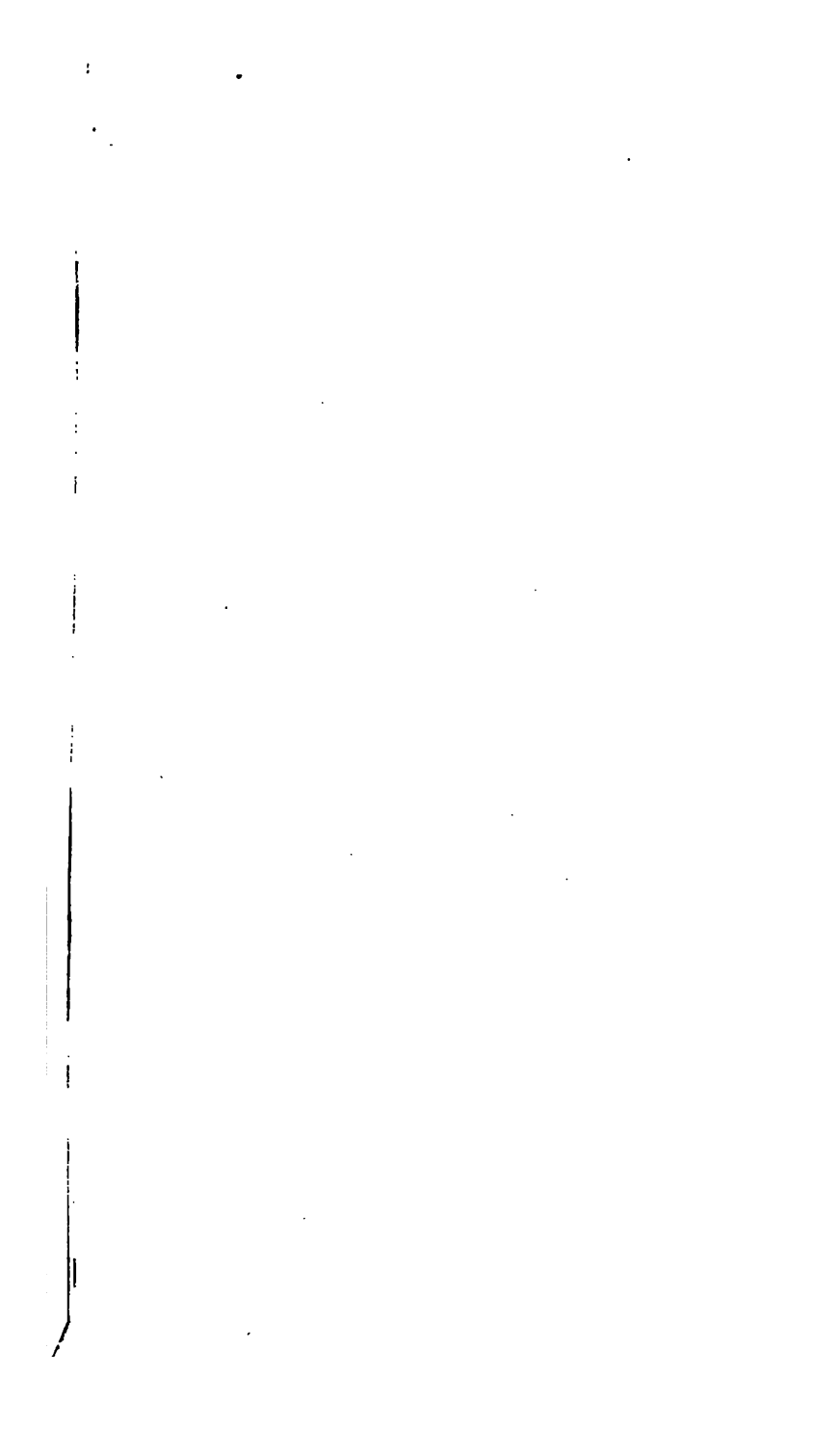


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THEY JUMP ABOUT IN THE CLASS-ROOM TILL THEY ALL GET EXHAUSTED, AND THEN THEY FALL DOWN ON THE FLOOR, AND REMAIN THERE UNTIL IT IS MIDNIGHT.

BROTHER MASON,

THE

CIRCUIT RIDER;

OR,

TEN YEARS A METHODIST PREACHER.

"I have led
A life too stirring for those vague beliefs
That Superstition builds in solitude."

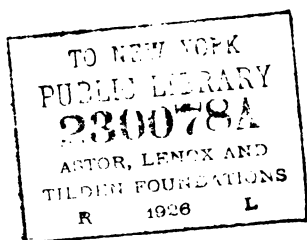
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"LA, ME! YOU DE PREACHER!—I'ZE WERY GLAD. BUT MASSA SAYS YOU NO DO MUCH GOOD DIS YEA', YOU BO YOUNG, AN' NO SPERIENCE. HE SCOLE WERY MUCH, KASE AN OLE MAN WAS NOT BENT."

THE CIRCUIT RIDER.

CHAPTER I.

The Reception.—Talk about the journey.—Conversation about the Circuit—First Sabbath—First round on the Circuit—Incidents—Observations.

"HAL-LOO!" A dog barked. "Hal-loo the house there!" in a very loud voice, for the house was some distance from the street, in a beautiful square of ground, decorated with evergreens, and the preacher was anxious to find a resting-place. This last shout brought to the gate an old colored man, and the vigilant dog.

"Is this where Mr. D. lives?" was the inquiry.

"Yes, sah," was the reply.

"Is he at home?"

"Yes, sah; he in de dinin'-room shavin'."

"Well, I am the preacher sent to the circuit this year, and I want to stay here to-night. Tell your master Bro. Mason has come."

"La, me! you de preacher!—I'se wery glad. But massa says you no do much good dis yea', you so young, an' no experience. He scole wery much, kase an ole man was not sent."

By this time, Bro. D. came into the yard, rubbing his razor on a silk handkerchief, and spoke rather sharply to Jim, asking him why he did not attend to his business.

"Massa D. mad now," said Jim, in an under tone, "but you no mind him." Jim hallooed out:

"Massa, de preacher here, him not so young as you t'ot—I knows he can preach some."

Bro. D. ran down to the gate with a very gracious smile, and taking the preacher by the hand, said: "Get off! get off! It's late, and you will stay with me to-night, of course."

"I was directed to your house," said the preacher, "and it is my intention to stay with you;" saying which he dismounted, and, removing his large saddle-bags, one end filled with books, and the other with his clothes, he followed Bro. D. into the house, while Jim took his horse to the barn.

Wrappers off, hat and whip hung up, and saddle-bags safely deposited under a table in the passage, Bro. Mason was ushered into the elegantly furnished parlor, and requested to be seated until Mrs. D. should be called. While Bro. D. was absent for his good lady, the preacher could not help reflecting upon what Jim had told him, but determined to make the best of it, and be as polite as possible. Just then Mrs. D. entered the parlor, wearing a pair of gold spectacles, and an elegant silk dress. As she entered, she said: "This is our new preacher, I suppose, Bro. Mason," and gave him a very cordial shake of the hand.

"You will excuse Mr. D., he will be in in a moment, he is putting away his shaving tools."

"Certainly, certainly, sister."

After some conversation about the weather, in came Bro. D. and said: "Well, Bro. Mason, I am very glad you have come; an appointment was given out for you last Sabbath, and we looked for you every day, and now that Saturday evening has come, here you are, and," said he, "you will have a big crowd to-morrow—the court-house will be full. Lawyers, doctors, merchants, and our judge will be there, and most of these are infidels, so you must give us your tallest sermon."

Good heavens, thought the preacher, what will I do! I have but three sermons in the world, and not one of them is a great sermon.

"Don't be excited," said Bro. D., "you must just stand up to it; the conference has sent you, and you must go right through, hit or miss."

The tea-bell rung, and soon all were assembled in the dining-room, where a general introduction was had to all Bro. D.'s family—two fine looking daughters and a little son.

Though both hungry and weary, the preacher could eat but little. His heart was sickened by what Jim had told him, and the prospect of meeting with such an august assembly at the court-house on the next morning.

Tea over, and all assembled in the parlor for prayers. No one could sing, and, therefore, the service consisted in reading and prayer. During the

prayer, there were many lusty amens and deep groans, and much rubbing of the hands, considered by many as signs of great piety. After prayer the family left, all but Bro. and Sister D.

"Well, Bro. Mason," said Bro. D., "how far have you traveled to-day?"

"About fifty miles, and that over a very rough road, and among, I think, a very rough people; at least, they appeared so to me," said Bro. Mason.

"Fifty miles!" said Bro. D., "why, that can't be possible. Where did you stay last night?"

"At Bro. H.'s, on Tar river," was the reply.

"Bro. H.'s—Bro. H. I don't know that brother, but I know you did not ride fifty miles."

"Well, that is what I was told, and I surely thought it quite long enough for fifty miles, and especially as I had neither dinner nor horse-feed."

"Well," said Bro. D., "I don't know, but that seems to me a big ride. At any rate, don't tell it to any other person; it may injure you, and injure the cause. But," he continued, "let us talk about our circuit; it's a large circuit, and a good one, and we'll look for big preaching, and a good deal of visiting. The preacher we had last year could do neither, and our presiding elder was no better. Indeed, I see no use for presiding elders any how. But, Bro. Mason, I am glad we have a new set of preachers this year, throughout, and I hope we will do better. We only paid about half last year, and you must spur up, or you will come out behind, too."

"How many appointments are on this circuit?" asked the preacher.

Bro. D., counting his fingers, said: "Twenty-two."

"Then we have two for every Sabbath, and one for nearly every day in the week."

"Yes," said Bro. D., "but you have plenty of time for visiting, and that you must do, or the old sisters will be down on you. Many of them, and our very best members, would not hear our other preachers, because they would n't visit."

"But," said Bro. M., "the preacher must have some time for rest and study, or he cannot show himself a workman approved of God."

"As to the study," said Bro. D., "I do n't believe in it any way. It's no use; just get up, and look to God, and fire away. That's the way our old preachers used to do; and I am sure they had a fine work wherever they went. Sinners were converted in crowds, and people were much more zealous than they are now. But, alas for Methodism! good old fashioned Methodism; her glory is gone. No such camp meetings as one had then, and no such shouting class meetings. But I hope a better day is coming. And now," said he, turning to Bro. Mason, with a groan, "I am a very plain man, and I want to say some plain things to you."

Our young preacher here began to think he might as well be plain too, and, with some severity of manner, said to Bro. D., that plain spoken men often met, and he supposed two had met on that very occasion;

"And now," continued he, "if you, Bro. D., are a plain man, so am I, and if you intend to use plain remarks, I hope you are Christian enough to take plain talk in a kindly way."

"Oh, it was nothing about you that I was going to say; it was simply to put you on your guard a little, about some of our members. There is our good Bro. T., that I always loved, but then he is not popular; he has not the confidence of the people; and I am sorry he puts himself forward too much for his own good, and the good of the cause."

"Do your family and his visit each other?"

"No, I am sorry to say, we do not."

"What is the cause of this?"

"Well, I can hardly say; but the women had a little falling out, and that grew into a coldness, and we scarcely ever exchange visits."

"Does he live in town?"

"Yes, just above me, on the other side of the street."

"Will you call with me to see him on Monday morning?"

"Well, Bro. Mason, I suppose you feel like going to rest, as you are weary after your ride of fifty miles, as you say. Your room is ready, and if you are, I will take you to it."

Bro. Mason was soon in his room, and covered in his bed; left to the exercise of his own mind, and to the study of his host, Bro. D. But chiefly was he asking what he should do with the judge, the doctors, the

lawyers, and the merchants, who should make part of his audience the next day. Out of his three sermons, he concluded to preach, "I am not ashamed of the gospel;" and with this his soul was soothed, and he soon sunk into the arms of sleep.

The next morning, at seven o'clock, all were up, and assembled for prayer, and Bro. Mason appeared unusually calm, while Bro. D. was quite sober and reserved. Prayer and breakfast being over, all retired, Sister D. saying:

"We will leave you alone; perhaps you would like to read or study a little before church, Bro. Mason?"

"If you please," said Bro. Mason, "though I might go to my own room."

"Oh, no," said the good lady, "you can remain here"—and, after reminding him of the great talent and dignity of the congregation he might expect, she retired.

It was but a short time, however, until Bro. W., the class leader, came in to see if the new preacher had come. He was introduced to Bro. Mason, and soon they were in quite a brisk conversation about the doings of the conference, and who was sent to this, that, and the other circuit. Bro. W. made a fine impression on the preacher's feelings, and gave him every encouragement needful in that very trying hour. He told him the congregation, at best, was small, but very kindly disposed toward their preachers.

"But," said Bro. Mason, "you have some lawyers, and judges, and doctors in the congregation, and they

are usually very difficult to please, especially lawyers. I scarcely ever knew a single lawyer to use ministers with common politeness."

Bro. W. replied to this by saying, "It was all true, but we have nothing of that kind to fear in this place. Our lawyers just took up the profession, and none of them are able men; and our judge is a very common man, elected from among the people, just because he was poor, but of good character."

"Then he is a county judge, and not a district judge," said Bro. Mason, very much relieved.

"That's all," said Bro. W., "and we all like him very much, though he is not a member of our church."

Just then the court-house bell rung, but Bro. W. gave no signs of leaving. Bro. Mason excused himself, and retired to his room for prayer, and to look over his manuscript notes for the purpose of refreshing his memory in the points of his discourse; but scarcely had he arisen from his knees, when a rap was heard at his door. On opening it, the servant said there were some gentlemen in the parlor who wished to see him. Down went Bro. Mason with his notes in his hand, and was introduced to three brethren from another part of the circuit. Scarcely were they seated; when one of these brethren said:

"What, do you read your sermons? Because if you do, we don't want you — no 'Piscopalians here — nor Pruspatarans nother."

"Oh, no," said Bro. Mason; "I do not read my

sermons. These are but a few notes of the leading thoughts in my sermon."

But the good brother looked very grave, and said: "That war' not the way the preachers did in old times; they jist went into the stand, and opened the Bible any whar', and tuck the fust text they found, and jist banged away. Then we had sich good old fashioned times."

Just then the last bell rung, and all were in a hurry to go to church. All were very cheerful but Bro. Mason and the enemy to reading sermons.

As they entered what was designed to be the court-house yard, Bro. M. asked, pointing to a rather poor looking log house, with a bell suspended between two posts at the one end, if that was the court-house. Several answered in the affirmative. All entered, but lo! there was not a soul within, but the old colored man who rung the bell. And then, the interior of that house! At one side was the judge's bench, which was simply an old carpenter's table, with two or three split-bottomed chairs, and a small pine table. This bench was ascended by means of a store-box at one end. Benches without backs were scattered in various ways all over the house; but were especially crowded near a miserable old tin-plate stove that stood in the middle of the house. Bro. Mason thought it best to take his stand by a small table that stood near the judge's bench. Seated on an old chair that stood near, he began to look for the Bible and hymn book. At last, a brother, seeing what was wanted, began to search in a box, in

one corner of the house, and finding a copy of the New Testament, with a blue woollen string so tied around it that it formed a cross on each side, broke off the string, and handed it to the preacher. But there was no hymn book. To supply this defect, a good old sister handed him a small volume, about as thick as it was long, and looking as if it had been the first hymn book that ever was printed. While the preacher was trying to find his first hymn, by the faint light that glimmered through the window behind the judge's bench, a good old brother, with a red silk bandana thrown over his head, began to sing, in a very coarse husky voice:

"We are bound to live in the service of the Lord,
We are bound to die in the army."

In this hymn, the few who were present engaged with great volume of voice, and with but little regard to any of the rules of music. Just as they were repeating the last verse, a good sister could suppress her emotions no longer, and gave vent to a loud scream, and, rising up; walked all over the house, shaking hands with every one present, not passing by the new preacher, of course.

By this time, about a dozen persons were added to the congregation, making in all about twenty. Just then a good brother approached the preacher, and suggested the propriety of standing on the judge's bench.

"The congregation," said he, "will be very large and it will look better to be up there."

The preacher looked, but his heart failed, and he concluded to remain where he was. Another brother whispered in his ear, "It's time to begin."

The preacher got up, and announced his hymn, in a clear, full voice, giving to each word its proper accent, and observing carefully all the points. The old brother with the red bandana thrown over his head, seemed to be the chorister, for he raised the tune, as before, and all engaged heartily in singing. This hymn sung, the prayer closed, and another hymn sung, the young preacher arose with great ease, and announced his text: "I am not ashamed of the gospel." By way of introduction, he gave a long and clear description of the character of St. Paul, and what the gospel had done for him, as the reason of the Apostle's willingness to preach at Rome. During the discussion there was the most marked attention, and all seemed to pass off to the entire satisfaction of all present.

The brethren and sisters all came to the young preacher, and shaking him heartily by the hand, encouraged him to go on; for he had made a good beginning. Among the rest was Bro. T., of whom mention has been made before. He insisted on the preacher going home with him for dinner, during all which time Bro. D., with whom the preacher stopped, and his family were standing near the door, to see what would be the issue. Bro. Mason consented to go with Bro. T. provided he should give notice to Bro. D. The notice was given by the preacher himself, and off he went to Bro. T.'s for dinner. Here he met

a plain, sensible, cordial family, where piety and good-will to all seemed to be in the ascendant. The afternoon passed off very agreeably.

Night came on, and the court-house bell rung for service. Some fifteen persons assembled, and Bro. Mason preached his second sermon from, "Awake! thou that sleepest." The house was in a most dismal condition; a few soft tallow candles were fastened to the walls of the house, by means of forked sticks pressed into the cracks in the logs, so as to include the candle between the log and the fork of the stick that was intended to supply the place of a candle-stick. As service was about closed, a good brother arose, and in a very loud voice said:

"Aint you goin' to give out no app'intment for the nixt round?"

"Yes, brother," said the preacher, "my colleague will preach in this house in two weeks, and I will be here in four weeks."

Another brother bellowed out: "Give out the class meetin' for nixt Sunday."

"At what hour?" asked the preacher.

"Three o'clock," was the reply.

The minister said: "Let us be dismissed?"

"Not yet! not yet!" said the brother with the red bandana over his head, speaking very rapidly. All was silence. "Aint you goin' to give out prayer meetin' for next Thursday night?"

"Yes; there will be prayer meeting in this house next Thursday evening."

Some one said: "Not in this house, brother; it will be at Brother M.'s, in the lower end of town."

After all this, the congregation were finally dismissed.

Bro. Mason went to Bro. D.'s, where he had stopped the previous night, though none of the family were at church. Knocking at the door, he was met by Bro. D., who said he supposed he would have gone to Bro. T.'s again, and was not looking for him.

"Oh, no," said the preacher; "I prefer sleeping in the same room as much as I can."

Both seated in the parlor, they soon entered into lively and pleasant conversation. The conversation at length turned on where would be the most suitable place for the minister to live, and it was agreed that, as all the other married preachers had lived in that town, he would do well to do so, too. The next morning, they went to look at the Parsonage. It was an old log house, sunk so far into the ground, that the floor was raised, in several places, above the mop-board. The chimney was an immense stack of rock in the middle of the house, and from the signs that were very prominent, both the chimneys, the one in the kitchen and the one in the sitting-room, smoked. These signs were not false, as the sequel showed. It was a very smoky house. When this was named as an objection, together with the lowness of the ceilings, and the probable dampness of the house, Bro. D. coolly replied, that "Methodist preachers' wives must just take things as they found them."

To this, Bro. Mason replied by saying, "there was no reason why they should have poorer accommodations than any other men's wives, and that his wife would not like to live in that house unless it was repaired." Bro. D. concluded it should be repaired, and so agreed to have it done in a week or two.

Bro. Mason was informed that his next appointment was on Wednesday, at 11 o'clock, about twelve miles up the west fork of — river.

Wednesday arrived, and Bro. Mason mounted his horse for his journey. The road was easy enough found, for it followed the course of the stream, crossing it about a dozen times. He arrived in good time, and found quite a number of persons sitting—some on the pile of wood in the yard, and some on the fence; some in their shirt sleeves, and some with their hunting-shirts. And from the number of guns that were leaning against the house, one would have thought it was a sporting country.

The preacher dismounted, while all eyes were upon him, and while the door of the log dwelling where he was to preach was full of sisters, all anxious to see the new brother.

The preacher crowded in, and the brethren after him, and by the time they were all in, the house was so full, there was scarcely room to stir. After the usual introductory exercises, the preacher gave out his text: "I am not ashamed of the gospel." The discourse was listened to with marked attention, and toward the close there was much excitement, some

screaming, some shouting, and some down on the floor.

It was the custom there to hold class meeting after preaching. The congregation was dismissed with the request that the members would stay for class. As soon as the benediction was pronounced, a good sister struck up a hymn, beginning with the words,—

“Come, humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve.”

This hymn but increased the excitement, which was already beyond what the preacher had seen before; and this made the congregation very reluctant to leave. In the course of an hour, however, all were gone, except the members. Then commenced the class, and, with it, a scene that beggars description. It was one continued exercise of jumping, clapping of hands, laughing, falling down, and singing. The brother, at whose house the meeting was held, was a very stout man, with a voice like a trumpet. He stood on a chair, in a corner, with his spiritual song book in his hand, and sung all sorts of hymns and tunes, at the top of his voice. This strange state of things continued until about three o'clock; in the afternoon when the people were so exhausted, that they could scarcely stand up.

There was one brother there of rather slender make, who had just floated about on the surface of this commotion, but who had not fully entered into its spirit. Not satisfied with his part of the exercise, he requested all present to be seated, so as to leave an open space

in the middle of the floor. This was done according to order, and giving the leather belt that was round him a lusty pull, to make it tighter, he screamed out:

“Now, Bro. P., give us one of your fastest, and I’ll show you how to go it.”

In a moment the singing commenced, and so did the dancing, and, with all, the people laughed. Just such a scene of fanaticism, I presume, was never witnessed before.

This exercise continued until the old man became so exhausted, that he fell on the floor. By this time it was near four o’clock. Soon the dinner was forthcoming, and all present refreshed their exhausted bodies with some very superior warm coffee.

Late in the evening the preacher looked at the class book, and found a record of some sixty names, with a few probationers; and what was stranger than all, the amounts paid ranged from ten to fifty cents for the preacher’s salary, making in all from that class about nine dollars a year. Many of the members paid nothing, and were offended if anything was said about paying the preachers. Their common saying was, “The Saviour did not preach for money.” How they found this out was always a mystery. But so certain were they of its truth, that they were never ashamed to make it known.

After filling an appointment on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, our young preacher arrived in the neighborhood of his Sabbath appointment on — creek. Here he stopped with Brother W., a hard

working, sensible farmer, but in rather straitened circumstances. Bro. W. seemed to be at peace with all living beings. His chief theme was the camp meeting that was to be held on a part of his farm, in September. In the morning the preacher and Bro. W.'s whole family went to the church. This was found in the woods, and built of very large logs, with all the cracks open, and neither door nor window-sash. The planks were laid down loosely, and some small trees, split, and shaved smooth on the flat side, and legs put in holes at each end for seats, were set, with some degree of order, on this plank floor. Near the roof, on the inside, were about a dozen swallows' nests, with the young ones so large that they could hang on the sides of the nests. The pulpit was simply a carpenter's bench, with a store box set on end to lay the books on. It answered a very good purpose, however. The congregation was large and attentive. The young preacher mounted the carpenter's bench, and was soon engaged in discussing, "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

The appointment for the afternoon was distant twelve miles, and over a rough road. Arriving at the place in good time, the preacher found a large private house quite full, and soon his text was announced: "I am not ashamed of the gospel." The attention was good, except when interrupted by a scream, or a shout, from some good sister or brother. Jim, the old colored man, from Bro. D.'s, was there, spending the Sabbath with his family, and after preaching he approached the

preacher with a broad, friendly grin, and said: "I's glad to see you once more. I's jist come to the 'clusion dat you a bery good man, and your text a bery good text. You's not 'sham'd ob de gospel any whar'; dat's right, I lub bold Christians—not 'shamed no whar'."

Jim embarrassed the preacher no little, and yet meant no harm. One brother near them seeming not to understand what all this meant, asked Jim why he talked so.

Jim had but to say, "I hears dat text once afore, from dat wery man's mouf," then all was plain.

This was the last appointment for some days, and the preacher concluded to go to town, and become better acquainted with the people. On his way, the next morning, he began to have fears about his stock of sermons. He had but one left for his next appointment in W., where he had already preached twice. He determined to study one or two more, as soon as he got where his books were.

How full of incidents is the life of an itinerant minister, and how strange a life it is to one entirely unacquainted with its lights and shades, as was our young preacher.

CHAPTER II.

- Preaching at Father H.'s—Quarterly Meeting—Protracted Meeting
Camp Meeting—Class Meeting—Whistling in Church.

BRO. MASON had applied himself closely for two days to the preparation of a sermon, on the text: "Thou wilt show me the path of life." Friday morning arrived, and off went the preacher to Father H.'s, about ten miles distant. The road was very good, and passed through some of the richest land in all that county. This afforded Bro. M., a fine opportunity for reflection. In due time he arrived at the neat little farm-house of Father H. There he found six or seven sisters, and a few brothers, seated in the main room of the house. Everything looked neat and comfortable. Father H. set out the stand with the Bible and hymn book on it, and set a chair behind it, and then whispered to the preacher to take his seat. This was done with so much kindness and gentlemanly bearing, that the preacher ~~could~~ but look very closely at the good old man: and as he gazed upon the soft and placid countenance, the bald head, and snow-white locks that hung down behind his ears, he thought of Abraham, and others who are named in sacred history. This train of reflection prepared his heart and his head for the service.

He read a chapter, sung a hymn, and prayed; and then read his text: "Thou wilt show me the path of

life." Just then he looked at Father H., whose face was radiant with a smile, and whose eyes seemed to sparkle with the joy within. The minister announced his text again, when he heard Father H. say, in a whisper, "Bless the Lord for that text; it is food for me."

While Bro. M. was showing how the Lord showed his people the path of life, Father H. grew more and more happy; and all at once he whistled as loud as he could. This startled Bro. M., but the congregation were as unmoved as if they were accustomed to the whistling. Presently he whistled again, and again, and again, and finally fell from his chair, as if he were entirely helpless. All this produced but little excitement among the people, though it entirely discomfited the minister. The brethren lifted up the old man, and laid him carefully in the bed, in one corner of the room. There he lay motionless, and apparently lifeless, until the next morning. At eight o'clock he awoke, and expressed himself as being as happy as he could live. On inquiry, it was found that this exercise was common to Father H. and that no man in the whole county led a more blameless life. He was regarded by every one as a truly Christian man.

On Saturday, the quarterly meeting commenced at the R— meeting-house. At the appointed time, the presiding elder, and the other preacher of the circuit, entered the large log meeting-house, and found Bro. M., and a small congregation already assembled. The presiding elder ascended the pulpit with quite an

air, and there took off his hat and wrappers, and laid them on the end of the pulpit. He then got up, and having read a chapter from the New Testament, on bishops, gave out his hymn with great pomp; and after singing and prayer, he read the text, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel." This threw terror into Bro. Mason's heart, for this was his favorite text, and the one he intended to preach from at the quarterly meeting, if called upon. But the elder preached it so differently, and with so little interest, that Bro. M. began to take courage.

After preaching, the members of the quarterly conference were convened, whereupon the presiding elder took the chair with as much consequence as if it had been a chair of state. After the usual opening exercises, the question was asked, "Who will you have for secretary?" But three persons were present, beside the two circuit preachers. The question of secretary was a very difficult one. All present were strangers to each other, and knew nothing about each others' names, except so far as the three members of the quarterly conference were concerned. One of these suggested that one of the preachers present act as secretary, as he could not write, and continued by saying, that he did not believe any of his brother members present could write. So the preacher in charge nominated the junior preacher, and he was elected *unanimously*. Now a question of ink and paper was raised. This was the hardest question yet. No paper could be found, nor was there such a thing

as ink in the house. The presiding elder politely offered his pencil, and gravely suggested that a blank leaf be torn out of the Bible for the occasion.

A brother handed down the Bible, but, lo! every blank leaf was gone—taken out for similar purposes before. Next, the hymn book was looked at, but it was in a similar state of bereavement. What shall we do, seemed to be the general inquiry. At last, the elder suggested that the family record might still be there. This suggestion was radiant with hope; but when they looked, behold! the minutes of a previous quarterly conference were written upon the only half leaf of the family record that was left. Pockets were searched for letters, and every one that was found had a small piece of blank paper at the foot, and by comparing them, it was concluded there was enough by joining them together with pins. But no pins were there, and the paper was used in scraps, as they were torn from the letters. All was now ready, when the presiding elder began his questions, one after another, and the scraps of paper were soon filled, but still the questions came. The secretary suggested that the papers were all full on both sides. The elder expressed great sorrow, and said that half of the questions, and the most important ones, were not yet asked.

At this point, one of the brethren got up, and said: "I see no use in so many questions any how. I know of no discipline for sich a string of questions. But some how or other our elders differ so much. One asks scarce no questions, and another asks a great

many, and always gives us so much trouble, and then we must pay 'em beside,"—and getting a little warm, he said, looking right at the elder, "And I see no use in elders any how."

"Order, brother," was the stern command of the elder. "I was sent here by the bishop, and intend doing up things right:" and, speaking kindly, he asked the brother who had just spoken, if he was not a Yankee, or if he had not come from the Yankee states.

The brother said: "No, I did not; what makes you ask that?"

"Simply," said the elder, "because I learn that all the Yankee Methodists are opposed to presiding elders."

"I'm no Yankee," was the gruff reply, "but I know enough to know that elders are of no use: never saw any good come out of them yet—and they look for their pay, and when they get it, it generally comes off the circuit preachers at last."

"We'll not discuss that question now," said the elder. "Proceed to business, brethren."

"But we can go no further for want of paper," said Bro. Mason.

"Well, we'll adjourn," said the elder, and pronounced the benediction.

One of the brethren, that had said nothing before, then said: "We have done nothing of any use to us—nothing about the preacher's quarterage and house rent, and table expenses."

"I have nothing to do with that—my claim is ten dollars; and you can fix up the quarterage claim at another time."

This did not take very well, for neither of the preachers had any money, and confidently expected some of the quarterly meeting.—Their hopes revived when they thought of "the usual quarterly collection for the support of the gospel."

The elder, calling Bro. Mason to one side, said: "You must preach to-night." Bro. Mason refused, but the elder left him, and so he had to comply.

Night came—the house was full, and Brother Mason, full of fear and trembling, commenced the service. He preached from, "Thou wilt show me the path of life," and had great liberty, and the sermon caused some considerable excitement in the congregation. The elder rose to exhort and close the exercises. He said, he expected a revival all round the district, and it must commence now, in this place. Very soon his voice could not be heard for the shouts and amens all over the house. He still attempted to talk, but it was of no use. Presently a brother struck up the hymn—

"When I can read my title clear."

Before the first verse was ended, the whole congregation was in perfect confusion. The sinners, back at the door, were standing on the benches, and the saints near the circle, were, some clapping their hands, some leaping up and down the aisle, some shaking hands with the preacher, and others lying their whole length

on the floor. And not a few of the old people thanked the Lord for old fashioned Methodism, for quarterly meetin's, for class-meetin's, and love-feasts; and, they said, they prayed that old fashioned shouting times would return. Just then a good sister, with a stentorian voice, sung out:

"Oh, there's a better time a coming, hallelujah!"

This produced such a scene as no man can describe. One roar filled the house; and some dogs that were under the floor began to bark. The reader may imagine what it was like. It closed about twelve o'clock, when the people all went home. The next morning, which was the Sabbath, the love-feast commenced about nine o'clock; and, although the hour was made known, and the doors strictly guarded by door-keepers, yet there was one constant running in and out, during the whole time of the meeting.

One man came to the door, who had been in such a meeting "more than twice or thrice." The door-keeper told him he could not enter. "It was ag'in' the rules, unless he j'ined the meetin'."

"Well," said the man, "I wont j'ine your meetin', for I b'l'ëve you're all a set of howlin' hypocrites. You wont do, no how; and you're enemies to the country and to our dimocratic government. Meetin's ought to be free any how. See here, friend," he continued, "aint you goin' to let me in?"

"Can't do it; it's ag'in' the rules."

"Well, sir," pushing against the door, "I'll be in

if I should tramp over your body. My wife's in there, and I'll be in, too!"

"Can't come, friend; it's ag'in' the rule; and if you try, I'll call the elder."

Passion began to get the better of the door-keeper and his friend, and words grew louder and louder, until they produced some excitement within. Presently the door flew open, and two men, with fast hold of each others' bodies, fell their whole length in the aisle. This produced great excitement among the people—women screamed, and men rushed to the door, both from within and without. The two men who had fallen in, were fighting most furiously, while the blood run freely. Efforts were made to part them, but these only enlarged the circle of anger, and, in a few minutes, more than a dozen men were engaged with clubs and rocks, and awful was the scene. Many of the females jumped out of the windows, and fled to the woods, while the old men remained in the house, trembling for their lives. The constable arrived, and, in the name of the commonwealth, commanded peace, but it was of no use. Finally the fighting men were parted, and an effort was made to arrest the transgressor. This but increased the fury of the crowd without, who swore no arrest should be made.

They got their friend in their midst, and pledged him their protection at the risk of their lives. The brother who kept the door, was taken to a neighbor's house, and washed, and had his wounds bound in the best manner they could be, under the circumstances



“LUCK AT THE LITE! LUCK AT THE LITE! LUCK AT THE LITE!
OH! THE LITE I SEE! LUCK AT THE LITE!”

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Here the matter ended, for the time being; and as it was then about twelve o'clock, and effort was made to commence public worship, it was agreed to postpone the sacrament until Monday morning.

The elder commenced the meeting, and in due course of time announced for his subject, "Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones." After laboring for some time to prove that wherever there was real, sound, old fashioned religion, there was noise and shouting, he wound up by exhorting the people to go on, and never fear danger. The apostles were persecuted, and so are the Methodists, and so they will be to the end of time.

"Instance," said he, "the scenes of this morning and how we are persecuted and tried!"

Stopping abruptly, he directed the stewards to take up "the usual collection for the support of the gospel among them."

"Now," said he, "let there be no singing while the collection is being taken up, nor shutting of the eyes, so you can't see the hat as it passes around."

This produced a general smile; but some did not seem to take it well. The stewards went round, and took up a collection of one dollar and ninety cents, all told. The elder complained a little about this, and said it would not pay his traveling expenses to the quarterly meeting.

One old brother of the quarterly conference got up, and asked the privilege of speaking; it was granted. He said he was not used to speaking, but wanted to say a few things that lay heavily on his mind. He

took out his handkerchief, and set one foot upon a bench, and commenced by saying:

"I've bin a Methodist for thirty years, and have seen a great deal in my time, but the like of the things I seen here this mornin', I niver seen before. There's a cause for this; our rules do n't suit the people; they are hard. I've seen this for years. This is a free country, and everybody wants the right to go to all meetin's. Closin' the doors ag'in' our neighbors wont do, and the people wont stand it any how. Then, ag'in, the people are fallin' out with the presidin' elder's system. They see no use in it, and bekase they know the collection ginerally goes to them, that's the reason the collection is so little this mornin'. Brithren, this must be changed, or we'll do no good."

It was whispered about, "He's a radical, he's a radical; he always has been."

The old man heard this, and arose again, and said:

"I'm no radical, but only a man that looks at the workin' of things, and the use of things, and there are many more jist like me; they see no use in elders any way, and there is a great deal of complainin' and talk about it, and things must be altered."

Here the elder got up and said: "Meeting to-night—let us be dismissed."

The congregation at night was very large, and everything passed off well, as did the other exercises of the quarterly meeting.

The two circuit preachers repaired to their several appointments on other parts of the circuit, publishing

at each point the protracted meeting on W—— creek. When the time arrived for the meeting, the preachers were there, as were, also, some ten or twelve of the brethren from other parts of the circuit. The house in which the meeting was held, was divided into four rooms below, and the kitchen, and had but one large room above. This was for strangers. Saturday night came, and, with it, about thirty men and women, to stay all night.

How they were to be accommodated was a question of no common interest to the preachers. With the horses there was no difficulty, for they were all turned into the meadow. But what shall be done with the people? still insisted on an answer. Bedtime, however, revealed the whole thing; all were assembled in the one great room up stairs, and pointed to quilts, etc., etc., that might be spread on the floor for beds. The preachers, of course, were in a regular bed, but it was composed simply of a feather tick laid on the cords of the bedstead, and but one cover; and this was intended for three persons, one beside the circuit preachers.

The cord in the bedstead proved to be very slack, and the result was that the man in the middle suffered a most intense squeezing, beside the cutting of his body with the bed-cord.

They were in bed but a short time, until an army of troublesome things laid hold of almost every part of their body. They were not alone in their sufferings from this quarter; the contest was general, all

over the room, and, for a time, it seemed as if the whole room must be vacated.

At last, one old lady suggested the plan of raising a window, and shaking the bed-clothes, on the outside: this was done, and proved to be just the thing. But in about half an hour every limb, of all in that room, was besieged again with an army more ferocious than the first. The bed-clothes were shaken again, and thus relief once more secured. By this time sleep made such imperative demands upon the eyes, that most of the company were sound enough before the next army advanced.

The next morning, all were up by daylight, thanking the night for its close, and rejoicing that they had escaped with their lives.

When the time for preaching arrived, the house was so crowded that it was very oppressive to be in it; the doors were all opened, and the windows raised, but still there was very little hope of relief. Bro. Mason was appointed to preach; and after looking over all the sermons, (he had only five,) he could find none so suitable to the occasion as, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." After he had gone through the opening exercises, he arose to give out his text, when lo! his eye fell upon our friend Jim. But there was no such thing as escape now. He commenced his discourse; but before he had proceeded very far, he recognized Bro. D. in the assembly; this caused him additional embarrassment; but he made out as well as he could, and closed in due time.

After the assembly was dismissed, Bro. M. saw, by the motions of Jim, that he wished to speak with him. He dreaded this, and especially if the interview should take place in the presence of others. Numerous were the introductions to the new preachers, and freely did the brethren express their hope that the year just commencing would be a prosperous one. Jim was ready to go, but could not think of leaving without speaking to the preachers. He made his way to where they were, and after being introduced to the preacher in charge, he took Bro. Mason by the hand, and with a hearty shake, he looked him broad in the face, and smiled, while he said:

"I's 'stremely glad you's our preacher dis yea'—you's jist de rite so't ob a man, you's 'shamed ob nuffin'; and bress God, you's like dat gosp' sermon. It jist de t'ing for us poor critters up here in de woods."

At this moment, Bro. D. presented himself, and learning that Jim was so well pleased with the sermon, remarked, with a smile, that he "supposed it was a favorite sermon, or it would not be preached so often."

This but increased the embarrassment of Bro. Mason, and he sought a place where he might weep, and pray for support in his trials. Here he formed the purpose to prepare all the sermons he could, and to depend no longer on his favorite subject. But what to do for assistance he could not tell; nor did he know what were the most suitable books. He determined to

consult with his colleague, and his presiding elder, the first time he could see him.

He returned the house, and found his colleague engaged in a prayer meeting, with several penitents on their knees, for the prayers of the congregation. As soon as Bro. Mason entered the room, he was called upon to engage in prayer. During the prayer the excitement increased, and before it was closed, it was impossible to hear his voice, so great was the noise. In a short time an old brother came to Bro. Mason, and requested him to go and speak to his son, who was down on his knees in deep distress about his soul.

"Go," said he; "for you can do him good, it was your sermon this morning that brought him to feel." Bro. Mason rushed to the place, and kneeling beside the young man, began to encourage him as well as he could. In a short time the young man professed to be converted, and, springing to his feet, exclaimed at the top of his voice, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." This started a new feature in the form of expression, and in a moment there was one general shout from all present, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." This greatly encouraged Bro. Mason, and he determined to go on, and work in the very best way he could. "Here," said he, "is one soul converted under my ministry, and by the instrumentality of that very sermon, and why shall I not preach it again?"

The prayer meeting closed about four o'clock, and Bro. Mason and his colleague, took a walk into the neighboring woods. It was near the last of August,

and the earth seemed to groan under its weight of produce, while the birds and the squirrels seemed to enjoy great life in the midst of the abundance.

"You seem to be somewhat cast down, said Bro. Mason's colleague. What is the matter?"

Bro. Mason told him frankly the circumstance of his want of sermons, and of the several interviews that Jim had had with him on the sermon he preached that day. "The fact is," said he, "I have preached that same sermon three times already, on this circuit, and nearly every time there was some one present who had heard it before."

The colleague groaned and looked wise, and said he was sorry it was so. This went to Bro. Mason's heart, like a dagger, and he wept freely, and said he had better go home. His colleague, being somewhat conceited, and professing a great degree of holiness, though without the common sympathy of man's nature, gravely suggested that it might be better upon the whole. The secret of this apparent want of kind and affectionate sympathy was not so much a desire to have Bro. Mason leave the circuit, as a jealous spirit occasioned by the success of the sermon in the morning. He alluded to this, but said he would preach himself that night and show the people what preaching was.

Bro. Mason soon discovered that he could expect neither encouragement nor sympathy from his colleague, and determined to open his heart no more to him.

Night came, and the colleague preached, but the people were very dead and listless. This was

accounted for in two ways; the people were exhausted by the intense excitement and exercise of the afternoon prayer meeting; and partly was the failure attributable to the great effort of the preacher to be logical, learned and eloquent.

The sermon was closed, and according to a previous agreement, Bro. Mason exhorted. In a short time the people began to say amen, then glory, then to stamp upon the floor, then to shout hallelujah, then to get upon their feet, until there was one universal scene of confusion and jumping; this continued for about an hour, when the colleague got up and said it was time to bring the exercises to a close, and at once pronounced the benediction. This gave general dissatisfaction, and murmuring was heard all through the congregation. One old sister approached the preacher and said it was wrong to close such a good meeting. She said there had not been such a prospect of a revival for years, and insisted on meeting in the morning, and that Bro. Mason should preach. "He's sich a good man."

The preacher still refused; but the sister said it should be so, and called a class leader and told him to give out a meeting for to-morrow. No sooner said than he mounted a bench, and said.

"Meetin' here to-morrow morning."

The sister here added, "And Bro. Mason will preach."

"Yes," said the leader; "and Bro. Mason will preach."

The congregation soon left, except those who had been there the night before. All who remained, passed the night as best they could, shaking the bed-clothes outside of the window as occasion required.

At the appointed time, in the morning, the house was filled with people, and Bro. Mason, with great fear and trembling, commenced the exercises. His text was, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." He had not gone far before tears began to flow freely, then the "amens" began, and then "glory," and then stamping upon the floor, and then clapping of the hands, and so on until the house was in a perfect uproar. Bro. Mason just stopped his sermon, and fell in with the state of things that then prevailed.

Several persons professed to get religion, and one sister insisted that Bro. Mason's preaching had sanctified her through and through.

Five persons united with the church, and the meeting closed, the preachers leaving for their other appointments. In due time, the camp meeting came on. The ground was in very good order, and all the tents, and five stands, together with the preaching stand, the circle, and the preachers' tent. The presiding elder arrived in proper time for the opening services, bringing with him quite a number of preachers. one of whom was an agent of a college, and preached the first sermon on Friday morning. The sermon was a good one, though heard very imperfectly. The people were in great commotion, trying to arrange their tents, and get ready for comfortable living.

Everything passed off well until Sabbath night. After the meeting had closed, which had been very much disturbed by the whooping and yelling of some rowdies in the adjoining woods, the people retired to their tents for prayer meetings. Brother Mason was invited to a large tent, where Sister L. presided. She told him how well the people were pleased with him, and how much good he might accomplish on the circuit. She told him he must lead the prayer meeting in her tent, and expressed the hope that it would be the best meeting on the ground.

Bro. Mason opened the meeting, and very soon it grew warmer and warmer, until nearly all the meetings in the other tents were broken up. Sister L.'s tent was crowded, and several persons went forward for prayers. Brother Mason was not a little surprised when a coarse looking man came to him, and asked him to come to the outside of the tent.

"What for?" inquired Bro. Mason.

"Oh, you just come along, and never mind what for."

Bro. Mason turned to go with this man, when a brother said to him: "Don't go, his son is down for prayers, and he is mad, and if he gets you out he may injure you, for he is a desperate man, and hates the Methodists."

Bro. Mason did not think so, and followed on. As soon as they were outside of the tent, the man said:

"Now, my friend, I want to talk with you. My son is forward there to be prayed for; and he is a fine

young man, and I wish you to notice him. He says he was awakened under your sermon at — creek protracted meeting. And see here," he continued, "I feel, too, as if I should be a good man. What shall I do?"

Bro. Mason invited him into the tent, and to the altar for prayer. This he refused, but wished to join the church as a seeker of religion. Bro. Mason told him he could do this at any time, but insisted upon his going into the tent, and kneeling for prayers. This he refused, but wished to meet the preachers next morning, to have some talk with them. Brother Mason invited him to the preachers' tent, and he agreed to come; both then walked back into the prayer meeting tent. They scarcely were in, when one after another came to Bro. Mason, to inquire what the old man wanted. They expressed their astonishment when told that the old man was serious.

Early the next morning, the old man came to the preachers' tent. He was recognized at once by Bro. Mason, and introduced to the other preachers present. The old man sat down very composedly, and said he had come to seek information.

"Well," said the presiding elder, "what subject do you wish information upon?"

The old man said, on the subject of class meetings.

"Oh," said the elder, "is that all."

"Yes, sir, that is the subject on which I am troubled; and but for class meetings, as you view them, I would be a Methodist," continued the inquirer.

"Well," said the elder, "we look upon them as a great means of grace, and our church would die without them."

"But where is your authority for class meetings?" asked the inquirer.

"Oh, Mr. Wesley first introduced them."

"But Mr. Wesley had no right to make a means of grace. God alone can do that."

"Well, they are an institution of our church, and we must have them."

"You say Mr. Wesley instituted class meetings. Will you please tell me what for?"

"Why of course as a means of grace, and we can not get along any way without class-meeting."

"But neither Mr. Wesley nor any other man can make a means of grace. God must do that. Have you any Scripture for class meeting?"

"Oh, yes; there where it says, 'They that feared the Lord met often,' etc; and here it is said, 'God himself kept the book, and was with them;' and again, where it is said, 'the disciples were in an upper room, and the doors were shut.' Class meeting is not just named in the Bible, but we know what is meant by these passages."

"You can not show any warrant in the Bible for any such meeting."

"I have already given you two passages, and they should be enough."

"But they don't prove class meeting to be of God."

"Well, they are good meetings any way, and I thank God for them."

"But God did not make them; you say Mr. Wesley made them."

"So he did."

"But you have not yet told me what Mr. Wesley made them for."

"Yes, I have."

"But you are incorrect. I will tell you what he made them for. It was to raise money to get churches out of debt; and to do this the more easily, each society was divided into companies of twelve."

"It can't be so."

"Look at Watson's life of Wesley, page 96, and inform yourself on this subject, and you will find I am correct."

"You must be mistaken, sir."

"I am not, and if I had the book I would show you the very words."

"Well, sir, there is no use in discussing that question now; it is enough for us to know that they are profitable and good meetings, and that we can't get along without them. Take away every other meeting but give me a good old fashioned, shouting class meeting."

"That might do you, but I want something more. want that which may be proved by the Bible."

"You don't suppose class meeting is contrary to the Scriptures, do you?"

"If you call it a means of grace it is, for there are no means of grace but such as are ordained of God."

"Well, God has owned and blessed it any how."

"How do you know that?"

"By my own experience, and that of others, and that's enough."

"But you may be mistaken."

"That can't be."

"I wish to ask you one question more. Where do you find any proof in the Bible for making class meeting, which is known to have originated in a money making scheme, a test of church membership?"

Pulling out his watch, he said: "It is near meeting time."

"You have time to answer that simple question, and I hope you will do it."

"We don't appeal to the Bible for that. It's a rule of our church."

"But the church is not above the Bible, and I supposed that all such vital questions as a man's membership in the church, should be decided by the Bible. And, moreover, I can see no proof, in either reason or the Bible, that a man, in every respect worthy, should be cut off from the body of Christ for violating a human rule, originating in a scheme of finance."

"Brethren it's time to go to church; the people, I suppose, are waiting."

The preachers all left, and on their way to the stand, the inquiry was, "Who is that? He seems to be a man of reading."

After they were all in the stand, the elder called a brother to him, and pointing to the inquirer, who was

then in the congregation, asked who he was. He was told that he was a man who had been a lawyer in—— for many years, but having failed in business, he retired to the country, and was then living with one of his sons.

“What sort of a man is he?” asked the elder.

“He is a rough spoken man, but is generally esteemed by his neighbors as honest, intelligent, and of good morals. He always comes to hear our preachers, and would join the church but for class meetings.”

The time arrived to commence the meeting, and the preacher in charge preached a very good sermon on sanctification.

CHAPTER III.

Conference Studies—Difficulty of studying on a Circuit—First Conference—Examination—Preaching at Conference—Return to the Circuit—New colleague—A pleasant year—Paid up.

THE course of study for young Methodist preachers, is laid down in the Discipline, and consists, in part, of English grammar and geography, Wesley's plain account of Christian Perfection, sermon or essay. These, with the first part of Watson's Theology, and the necessary study of sermons, for the every day demands of a large circuit, make the task of a minister, under the most favorable circumstances, one of great and discouraging difficulty.

Bro. Mason had studied grammar and geography, and was told that the examination upon these would be very easy. But the perfection question he feared. He determined to read all he could upon the subject; hence he borrowed all the books he could find upon that subject. In reading these, he found a variety of opinions upon this subject, all claiming to be scriptural.

Each writer not only differed from all others, but claimed to be right, and this claim was not unfrequently set up in language that betrayed an unkind spirit. This, joined to the fact that two of the oldest men in his charge, and who professed the highest attainments in holiness, were such enemies to each other, that they

would not take the Lord's Supper together, nor speak to each other, brought Bro. Mason's mind into a state of great perplexity upon this subject. He freely expressed his belief in teachings of the Bible on this doctrine, and took the ground that it was a growth in grace, and that it consisted in a conformity of the heart and life to the law of God. Love to the brethren, he supposed, was one of the usual signs of a clean heart. He wisely concluded to abandon all books but the Bible, and to follow closely its teaching on this, and on all other subjects of vital importance.

But this was not his only difficulty. Others of a more general character lay in his way. He had but a few rest days at most, and these were employed chiefly in doing what he could to make his family comfortable during his next absence.

His only alternative, was to study while out on his circuit. He took his books with him, and as soon as meeting was over, he sat down to read. But how soon did he find that this course could not be followed. The houses he preached in had generally but one room, and he was annoyed either by the constant talk, and the thousand and one questions of the good sister, by the perpetual fuss among the six or eight children, or by the constant evidence that he was in the way. These difficulties were so general, that he was compelled either to abandon his studies altogether, or go to the woods, if the weather would permit. This last determination was carried out. He studied in the woods, and on horseback, nearly all his studies of the year. Often

did he leave his stopping place early in the morning, when he had but a few miles to ride to his next appointment, stop by the way, hitching his horse to a bush, and study until it was time to go to his preaching place. By persevering in this course, he mastered, as he supposed, all his studies.

The time arrived to leave for conference; and after getting money matters arranged as well as they could be, he and his wife began to arrange his clothes, and put them into the saddlebags. He expected to be gone about two weeks, the seat of the conference being one hundred and fifty miles distant, while the conference session itself would last one whole week.

At the appointed hour, on the day of starting, the preacher in charge rode up to the door, and reported himself ready for the journey. Off they both started, with light hearts and joyful spirits. At dinner time, they fell in with two other preachers from a neighboring circuit, and the four agreed upon a place to stay all night. Arriving at this place, they found four other preachers there before them. What to do they did not know. It was then nearly dark, and no other place near, where they might stay, while the house in which they were was so small, that there was no hope of accommodation or comfort. While in this difficulty, the good brother of the house insisted upon their staying, if they would consent to be laid upon the floor. To this they readily agreed. Bedtime arrived, and the necessary arrangements were made for sleeping. By the time some children, and the six preachers, whose

lot fell upon the floor, were down, the whole floor was thickly covered.

They were not long down, however, before it was very evident they were to be annoyed by a lot of pigs under the floor. The pigs were unusually restless, and about midnight the good brother of the house determined to drive them off, and for the purpose of keeping them off, to tie his big dog by a post which supported one of the sleepers of the house, near where the pigs lay. This was done, but the last state was worse than the first. The pigs determined to reoccupy their place, came in a body, and began the contest with the dog for their place of rest. The dog gave battle for awhile, but getting entangled in his rope, the pigs gained the day, and for awhile it was supposed they were taking the dog's life. The good brother of the house began to fear for the safety of his dog, and taking his lard lamp, he again repaired to the scene of action. But the pigs, determined not to be routed this time, set themselves for defense. The brother got a fence-rail, and began punching them, which created no little confusion. Not able to endure this mode of attack, the pigs fled, and in their hurry and confusion one of them ran against the good brother, throwing him down, and injuring him no little. He came into the house bruised and bleeding, and his wounds were duly dressed with cloths rung out of warm vinegar. The question arose as to the condition of the dog, who seemed to be very quiet. The eldest boy, about twelve years old, was sent down

to see, and lo! the dog was dead—hung by his own rope.

Next morning, all were up in good season, except the good brother who had been hurt. He was too unwell to get up, but kindly told the brethren where to get feed for their horses, and asked them to be good enough to take care of them themselves. To this they readily agreed, and while out they concluded to separate, and by no means stop at the same house together, lest they might meet with similar difficulty. After breakfast, each party agreed upon where to dine, and where to stay all night, and off they started.

At noon they stopped, as per agreement, and and although they met other preachers, everything passed off finely. At night, they stopped at the designated places, and, to their great joy, found no strangers. Their sleep was comfortable and refreshing, and next morning they went on their way rejoicing.

In due time they arrived in the city, the seat of the conference, and found the streets pretty well filled with preachers, especially near the church. In the afternoon, the young preachers met in their various classes for examination. Bro. Mason feared his examination very much; he knew that the members of the examining committee were unlearned men, and this increased his fear. But how soon was all fear gone, when the senior member of the committee rose and said, he was not learned in the present course of studies, and would confine himself chiefly to some plain questions on the Bible. He said that he took it for granted that the

young brethren had all read the entire course. After a few questions on the Bible, the class was handed over to the other member of the committee, who frankly stated that he had never studied grammar or geography, and was satisfied that the class knew more about these things than he did. And thus the much dreaded examination ended, greatly to the satisfaction of Bro. Mason. The conference assembled next morning, and Bro. Mason was greatly delighted with the venerable and saint-like bishop, and the healthy and practical appearance of all the preachers.

Just before the hour for adjournment, the chairman of the committee on public worship rose to announce the appointments for preaching at three o'clock and at night; and to the no little confusion of Bro. Mason, he was appointed to preach at one of the most fashionable churches in the city. He tried to be excused, and to get a substitute, but all was of no avail. At the appointed hour, he went to the church, and found it filled with a fine looking congregation. He ascended the pulpit with much trembling, and commenced his services. He could scarcely see to read his hymn, and his voice trembled very much. After prayer, however, he felt better, and much more composed. In due time he announced, "I am not ashamed of the gospel," and preached with unusual freedom. Many of the more aged ministers met him in the aisle, and spoke to him kindly about his sermon, and encouraged him to go on, and never think of giving up the ministry.

At the proper time, his name was called in the conference, and his elder gave a very favorable report of him during the past year; and the committee of examination reported favorably also. In the course of this examination, his colleague said he was not very acceptable among the people; he did not mix with them enough, and confined himself too closely to his books. "And," continued he, "the people think he cannot preach."

Another brother got up and said he had just passed through the circuit where that brother labored, and heard the most favorable accounts of him; and that the people wanted him back another year.

Another brother cried out: "There is a long petition here for him now."

The elder here moved that he be continued on trial, and it was carried unanimously. The conference closed greatly to the satisfaction of Bro. Mason, and he was returned to the circuit the second year, in connection with Bro. L. in charge.

This proved to be a very agreeable association. The two preachers lived and labored together like David and Jonathan; they counseled together as to the best interests of the circuit; and in preparing their sermons, they rendered each other what aid they could. The result was that a great many new and interesting sermons were prepared that year.

Bro. Mason, and his small family continued to live in the old log house, which had been somewhat repaired, and made merely fit to live in. It was the

best he could do, and even that was thought by some of the brethren to be a good house. It was merely because it was in town, and in this only had it the advantage of the commonest houses in the country.

But the year was one of success in more respects than one. Many were united to the church, and the preachers were *paid up*. A revival could not have astonished the people more than this, for it never had been done before, though the circuit was called wealthy. By some means or other, the old brethren changed their faith in the doctrine that a quarter of a dollar each quarter, was the true meaning of what is vulgarly called quarterage. Some of them paid a *whole dollar* every three months.

CHAPTER IV.

Visit to friends—Removal to another Circuit—Difficulty in getting a house—First wedding—Chopping wood—Preaching suspended—The difficulty about oats—About wheat—Protracted meeting—The new appointment—Change of colleague—Difficulty with colleague—Difficulty with sixteen local preachers—Farewell sermon.

AT the close of the year, Bro. Mason and his family concluded to visit their friends in the state of — They packed up their household affairs, and stored them away in a vacant house, leaving them in the care of Bro. D. and subject to order.

The morning before they left, a good old sister urged the favor of taking her daughter to a town about twenty-five miles distant, and which lay just on the way to where the preacher was going.

This request was hard to refuse, but much more difficult to comply with. The carriage would hold just four persons, and there were just that number in the minister's family, including a child two years old. This was thought to be quite a load, with the trunks, for one horse, over such rough roads. All this was stated, but did not seem to strike the old sister as any difficulty at all. "She knew of one horse pulling six persons many a time, and now there's but five."

"But, sister," said Bro. Mason; "there is not room in the carriage; and, beside that, the carriage is weak, and I fear it will break down."

"Never mind that," said she, "trust in Providence, and all will be safe."

"I would like to accommodate you," said Bro. Mason, "but, indeed, I cannot, unless I walk most of the way myself."

"Oh, that you can do easy enough, and not hurt you a bit; and," said she, "my gal will have no bundle but just a little carpet-sack. You can take her, I know you can."

"But, sister," said Mr. Mason, "the stage will go out in the morning, and she can go in that, and get there much sooner."

"Oh, never, never, it costs too much, and she is afraid to go that way," and putting on her sun bonnet she left, but insuring the presence of her daughter in the morning.

The morning came, and so did the girl. What to do Bro. Mason did not know. If he took her, he must walk, or run the risk of breaking down his carriage. He called upon Bro. D., and told him how it was, and asked him to go and dissuade the girl from going. Bro. D. did so; but it was all of no use, so she would. Bro. D. proposed paying her way in the stage; but no, she would not go that way at all. Then Mrs. Mason proposed to go in the stage, if the girl's father would pay her passage. But this, the girl assured them, would not be done. This ended the matter; so she must, or there would be a difficulty.

They all got into the carriage, but it was soon discovered that Miss —— had so many clothes on that

she left very little room in the hinder seat for any one else. This made the case almost beyond endurance, but it must be borne with for peace's sake.

They traveled about three miles, when the hinder spring of the carriage broke, and compelled them to stop. Mr. Mason took his child in his arms, and all went to the nearest house, to remain there until the carriage could be taken back to — to be repaired. The family where they stopped, seemed in a very bad humor, and with difficulty were persuaded to let the ladies stay there until the carriage could be fixed.

About the middle of the afternoon, they were all ready for traveling—the carriage repaired in good order. In the meantime, the ladies got dinner, and Mr. Mason had to pay for all—the extra passenger having no money, though her father was well to do in the world.

It was determined that Mrs. Mason should drive, and Mr. Mason should walk. This plan saved both horse and carriage, but was hard on Mr. Mason, for the July sun was very warm. But what could not be helped must be endured.

Wearied and no little disturbed in feelings, they stopped, late in the evening, at Father Mac's., where they were received very cordially, and treated with great kindness. Early the next morning they were off, and in due time arrived at —, where they got rid of their extra passenger. Driving past the rich uncle of this young lady, where they left her, they put up at the hotel, and fared as travelers usually do, at

THEY WERE IN BED BUT A SHORT TIME, UNTIL AN ARMY OF TROUBLESOME THINGS LAID HOLD OF ALMOST EVERY PART OF THEIR BODY.



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hotels in country towns, where drinking whisky is the business of one half of the citizens. After traveling up hills, and down hills—some of them so steep that the horse could not hold back the carriage, unless all got out and walked, they arrived in safety among their friends.

At the conference, Bro. Mason passed his examination, and was ordained deacon, and appointed to — circuit, as preacher in charge. Soon he was among his friends, and soon himself and family were on their way to the new circuit. Many were the conjectures as to what sort of a circuit it was, and how they would get along. One determination was, to be plain and faithful as Christians. In due time, they arrived on the circuit, weary, and among strangers. They had been but a few days at Bro. L.'s, where they were directed to stop, until they were politely informed that company was expected, and it would be quite a favor if they would leave. They packed up and left, of course, and soon found another place, where they *might* stay a few days.

Meanwhile, Bro. Mason tried to get a house. The old house that had been used as a parsonage, was in the country, and in the middle of a large field, about one mile from any other house. It was found to be unfit for use, the windows being broken, and the doors having been left open so long that the sheep found in it a good shelter from the heat and storm. Strict search was made in the village of —, where a small house, in a remote part of the town could be had.

This house was one of a row of frame houses, built in the side of a hill, so that there was no possibility of getting out at the back side. There was a shoemaker's shop on one side, and a tin-shop on the other; but this was all that could be done. They moved into it, but soon found it impossible to occupy it with any sort of comfort. On the back side it was damp, and at either end the shoe hammer or the tin hammer were constantly at work.

In a few weeks, however, another house was vacated, and in this they lived very comfortably until the end of the year. They had not been long in this new house until Mr. Mason was invited to marry a couple about ten miles distant, in about a week. He told the gentleman he had not yet got his license, but would have it in due time to be at the wedding. Court being in session in the county town, the license was obtained.

On the morning of the wedding-day, Mr. Mason and his wife dressed as plainly as they could, and started for their first wedding. As they came within sight of the house, they found the yard and the porch full of people. Mr. Mason trembled lest he should make some mistake. As soon as they entered the yard, information was given that a local preacher had been employed, fearing that Mr. Mason might not get his license.

"But," said the father of the bride, "as you are the circuit preacher, you do the job, and we will divide the pay."

Mr. Mason refused, but when the local preacher came to him, and insisted that he should perform the

ceremony, he finally consented. When the proper hour arrived, Mr. Mason was called in, and after great difficulty pushed his way to the proper place. He was there but a moment, with scarcely room to move, when the couple to be married pushed their way through the crowd to the spot they were to occupy. As they passed in, the people filled in so closely behind them, that they were pushed right up against the minister, so that he had to hold back his head to see them. In this most straitened and unpleasant condition, the ceremony was pronounced, and the happy pair dismissed as husband and wife. Mr. Mason got out of the house as soon as he could, and presently was followed by the local preacher and the groom.

"See here, preacher," said the young gentleman, "come this way, I want to pay you off." Mr. Mason hurried to the designated place, and there the following conversation took place.

"Mr Mason, I called upon you first, but I was so anxious to get married, that I was afraid you would not be able to do it for want of a license. I come home, and dad thought I'd better go for Mr. G., and now I am married and glad of it."

"If you had let me know of this," said Mr. Mason, "I would not have come."

"Nor I," said Mr. G.

"Well, gentlemen," said the groom, "it's a hard case, but I'll just do as the old man said, divide the fee;" and putting his hand into the pockets of his pantaloons, after removing his white cotton gloves,

he inquired. "What's to pay gentlemen?" Taking his hand from his pocket with some change in it, he said: "Here's one dollar and a half, I'll just divide it equally." And giving each of the clergymen seventy five cents, he wheeled and went to the side of her serene highness, the bride, and sitting there with her hand in his, both in white cotton gloves, they looked as if a shadow might never becloud their pathway, or as if they would have neither fightings without, nor fears within.

Mr. Mason found it very difficult to get fuel, not because wood was scarce, for they lived just in the midst of vast forests, but because he had no money, and the brethren seemed unwilling to bring him wood without it. The wood must be had, and Mr. Mason determined to get it himself. He called on Esq. — a very swearing, wicked man, and asked the privilege of chopping wood in one of his new fields. The request was no sooner made than granted.

"Then," said Mr. Mason, "I want a set of your horse-gears, when the wood is chopped, so that I may haul it in." This request was granted also.

Mr. Mason then borrowed an ax from one of the brethren, but it was so dull that it would not cut without grinding. The brother pointed to the grindstone, and told Mr. Mason he could grind the ax to suit himself.

"I have a better ax," said the brother, "but you preachers don't know how to use an ax, and I'll give you that one, you can't hurt it."

Mr. Mason got a boy to turn the grindstone, and in due time the ax was brought to an edge. Then Mr. Mason went to the field and chopped down two trees, very hard, dry, white oak, and chopped them into lengths suitable for one horse to haul. Next day the horse was geared, and soon a fine pile of first-rate wood was hauled to the door. As the pile grew a little large, a good brother suggested that it might be in the way of wagons passing along the road.

"What shall I do?" said Mr. Mason: "I have no one to help me roll the logs up any higher."

"Well," said the good brother, "I know they'll be after you for blocking up the road."

"But the road will not be blocked up," said Mr. Mason; "the logs will not be within two feet of the road."

The good brother, a stout hearty man, turned away with the single remark, "They'll be after you."

In the evening the horse-gears were returned to Esq. — with many thanks. The squire said, "You have a fine pile of good wood, and when you want more just go and get it, and ask no questions."

"You saw my wood, did you not?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"Will it be in the way where it is?" inquired Mr. Mason.

"Not at all," said the squire; "just let it lie there until you are ready to cut it up. And," continued he; "I told your Brother — so when he spoke to me about it *this evening*."

"Ah," said Mr. Mason, "has Brother —— been to see you about it?"

"Yes, sir," said the squire, with an oath, "and I told him you had a right to put your wood there, and that he ought to help to haul it, and cut it up."

"What did he say to that?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Oh," said the squire, "he said it would do you good; it would keep you from getting lazy."

Mr. Mason pondered these things in his mind, and concluded that all would work for his good; and that, perhaps, he needed just such thrusts at his feelings to make him a better man.

After everything was arranged so as to insure some degree of comfort to his family for a few days, Mr. Mason left home for the purpose of visiting one of his far-off congregations. After crossing several large mountains, he at last struck a main road, leading from F. to S., and following this road, in a southerly direction, some twelve miles, he arrived at Bro. W.'s. There he stopped for the night. During the evening, the conversation turned on the character and condition of the congregation to be visited the next day.

Bro. W. gave it rather a hard name, both for morality and attention to the wants of the minister.

Next morning, Bro. Mason was ready to leave, and getting all the directions he could, as to the road, concluded he could find the way without a guide. He had not gone more than a mile, however, before the path became so indistinct, that he knew not what to do. He got off his horse and looked about for the

road, but all in vain. He concluded he was on the right direction, and road or no road, he would go on. It was not long before he found himself on the top of a high hill, with a fearful rocky ravine just before him.

Confident of being successful, he got off his horse again, and fixing the bridle so that it might not be injured, he ventured down the hill, his faithful horse finding his way after him as best he could, among the rocks, and brush, and briers, that covered the whole hill-side. In due time, both arrived safely in the bottom of the ravine. Here Mr. Mason felt, for the first time, that he was lost. But on looking round a little, he found what seemed like a path, and following it for a few rods, it grew into a more distinct road.

Joy began to illuminate Mr. Mason's mind, and his horse seemed to be joyful too. Following this road up the side of the hill the summit was soon gained. From this mountain height could be seen an extensive field of hills, forest and rocks, with here and there a small farm. Going down this hill, and rising another, Mr. Mason suddenly beheld a small cabin, with a clearing of about two acres. Looking at this cabin, he saw the fence, and the yard around it, literally crowded with men and women. As he came still nearer, he discovered numerous guns set against the house, with strings of squirrels, a few opossums, and any quantity of partridges, distributed so as to readily show their proper ownership. Most of the men and women had neither shoes nor stockings on, and but little else that looked like the clothing of civilized

people. As soon as the minister entered the house, which he found well supplied with rude benches, the people followed, and soon filled up every seat in the house, while many were left to stand about the door.

During the singing of the first hymn, there were evident signs of high excitement. As soon as the prayer commenced, so did the clapping of hands, the pounding of the benches with the fist, the thumping of the floor with the knees, the screams and groans, until a scene supervened that no pen can describe. It was a long time before this state of things could be so modified that the sermon might be introduced. The sermon was commenced, however, but before it progressed far, such was the uproar that the preacher just stopped, and looked with amazement. In the course of an hour, and from pure physical exhaustion, things quieted down, when the preacher deliberately told the people there would be no more preaching there during that year. The people quietly left, the men taking their guns, and the women taking the game. About the middle of the year, preaching was taken away from another place because the people would pay nothing, although abundantly able. After indulging in some angry and severe threats, the people finally concluded to draw up a subscription, and some would sign so much to be paid in corn, and others so much to be paid in something else. One brother signed three bushels of oats. This done, the minister was duly notified, and requested to preach to them as before, with the assurance that all should be paid. As

appointment was made and filled, and an assurance given that prompt pay would secure prompt attention to ministerial duty.

As Mr. Mason had to keep his horse at the tavern of the village in which he lived, it was agreed that the grain subscribed should be taken there, and the minister credited for the amount received. Looking over the books, it was found that the brother who had subscribed the three bushels of oats had brought in two and a half. This fact was marked, and the next time the subscription was seen, it was found that he was credited in full for the oats. This discrepancy was named to some leading brethren, who advised that the tavern-keeper's book be brought to the church, and compared with the subscription in Bro. K.'s presence. The proof was so clear, that the brother confessed, and agreed, for the sake of himself, to make it all right. So, the next day, Bro. K. was found going to town, with his half bushel of oats. Poor man! this did him some good.

In due time, the claims of the minister were presented to another congregation, and while the brethren were subscribing their several amounts of grain, and bacon, and butter, a good sister, and wealthy, too, for that section of country, said to a friend next her, that she had three bushels of wheat that was a little spoiled, and she would give that, saying, "He can make some use of it."

When the wagon arrived with the grain, etc., which had been collected, the minister concluded to put all

the wheat in one box. This was done, but when a little was needed for family use, it was found to be a total loss—the three bushels of spoiled wheat had spoiled the whole. This Bro. Mason could not endure, and the next time he visited the congregation, the fact was tated, when the good sister confessed that the spoiled wheat was hers, and she would charge nothing for it. Thus ended the wheat affair; but at the expense of Bro. Mason.

It was determined to hold a protracted meeting at —, to commence on a certain day. Bro. Mason's colleague was sent on to begin the meeting, with the understanding that Bro. M. would be there on Saturday night. Bro. M. went, according to agreement, and found the neighborhood in a most intense excitement. Many had "got religion," was the report from all quarters.

Such was the excitement on Sabbath morning, that Bro. M. could not preach. Persons would begin to scream and suddenly leave the house, as if to flee from the scene, but would fall down in the yard, and by the fences, and scream and groan in the most piteous manner. At one time the benches were all piled up at each side of the house, and the congregation stood on the floor packed together so densely, that it was impossible to move one way or the other. This state of things lasted for five days, when the meeting was closed with an accession of fifty persons to the church.

At the end of six months, however, but a few were admitted into full membership. All the others

had backslidden. It was concluded at this meeting, to commence another protracted meeting in a neighborhood noted for wickedness of all kinds. Bro. Mason passed through this neighborhood, and made arrangements to use a school-house just finished, and to commence the meeting on a given day. Many of the "working" brethren and sisters were engaged to go to that meeting, provided they would take their own provender with them, and lodge in the school-house, for it was not expected that they could find lodging in any other place, there not being a Methodist within ten miles of the spot. True to their trust, they came at the appointed time, and the meeting was commenced.

On Sabbath morning, such was the immense size of the congregation, that it was thought best to have service in the school house yard. Bro. L. preached, and produced a fine effect. At the close of the meeting a very hard looking man got on a stump, and asked the congregation to listen to him for a few minutes.

He began thus: "You all know me; I live one mile from here; I have plenty of pasture and horse feed, and plenty of chickens;" and, turning to the preacher, he said: "I have often heard that preachers like chickens, and everything else that's good. Now," said he: "this meetin's goin' to do us poor devils good, and let's try and feed the people. Come to my house;" and pointing in a certain direction, he said: "that's where I live, come on."

Then getting down from the stump, he mounted his sorrel horse, and started off, hallooing for all to

follow him. The preachers, and many others, determined to go. Their horses were put away, and they were soon invited to a good dinner. After dinner was over, Bro. Mason proposed a prayer meeting, this was readily agreed to, and before it closed the kind-hearted landlord and his wife, and several others, were happily converted. This caused great joy, for this was the leading family of the neighborhood, and would, no doubt, greatly influence others to turn from their evil ways.

Evening came, and the school-house was filled to overflowing. Bro. Mason preached, and the effect was great. Persons fell from their seats in every part of the house. An attempt was made to get all these persons into one place, but this was found to be impossible, owing to a set purpose on the part of a row of persons, who planted themselves solidly from one side of the house to the other. Several efforts were made to pass through, but to no effect. Bro. Mason suggested to some brethren the propriety of dividing the force, one party to remain at the pulpit in charge of Bro. L., the junior preacher, and the other to get out at the window, and commence at the door. This was agreed to at once. In a few minutes, prayer meeting was going on at both ends of the house, which soon broke up the vile purpose of those who had obstructed the passage from the pulpit to the door. As soon as this was done, all the penitents were taken to the pulpit, and many were hopefully brought to the liberty of spiritual freemen. This meeting continued for

nearly a week, and the result was the organization of a church of over sixty members. Brother Mason frankly informed them that they must begin to support the gospel liberally, to take the church papers, and to sustain a Sabbath school. Five years after this, it was found that this church acted a noble part from the beginning, and liberally sustained every claim that was presented to it.

This successful meeting was a season of sunshine to the two ministers. But soon this season of joy was changed to one of sorrow to Mr. Mason. The colleague whom he loved, and who could preach well, and who sustained the administration of his senior, was taken away by the presiding elder, and one without talent, prudence, or experience, put in his place. This was a heavy stroke, both to the circuit and to Bro. Mason.

It was not long, however, before it was evident to all that the change was a very injurious one; and at the suggestion of several official members, Bro. Mason proposed to his colleague a different course, stating that he feared the present mode of preaching, and general conduct among the young persons, would be very injurious. This gave the young brother great offense, and from that time he assailed Bro. Mason on all occasions, even from the pulpit. Bro. Mason filed charges against him in the quarterly conference, which were all sustained. Meanwhile, he proposed, that, if his colleague would take back what he had said against him, both in private, and from the pulpit, he would prosecute no farther. This was readily

agreed to, and the whole matter ended to the satisfaction of all concerned.

In a very few respects, the circuit was pleasant, but in many others it was very unpleasant. Unfortunately the policy of the preachers and the quarterly conference, in past years, had brought before the public, in the shape of local preachers, a large number of illiterate and self-willed, conceited men, who could neither preach, nor, in any other way, ornament a polite Christianity.

- These men were in the habit of opposing almost everything the circuit preachers proposed, and especially the administration of discipline, and their efforts to raise some little means to live on. Such remarks as these were common: "Preachers ought not to preach for money." "The apostles got no salaries." "I can live on one half what preachers get," and such like sayings. And if a member of the church was disciplined, no matter for how great an offense, some one of the local brethren would make it convenient to visit that person, and abuse the administrator. By this course, they induced a number of persons to appeal their cases to the quarterly conference, and thus increased the trouble of the minister, and injured the peace of the church.

These good brethren were in the habit of holding protracted meetings, of preaching erroneous doctrine, and of urging the necessity of re-baptism of persons already baptized by sprinkling or effusion. These things were supposed by Bro. Mason to constitute a

sufficient cause of discipline. Accordingly, the offenders were duly notified to appear before the next quarterly conference to answer certain charges. It so occurred that the different persons were charged with different forms of heresy, and were at variance among themselves. This made it practicable to bring one to testify against another. And as one after another was examined, the result was evident that there must be a conviction of all who were arrested. It was proposed by Bro. Mason, that if they would make suitable acknowledgements to the churches where they had issued their heresy, and promise to sustain or let alone the circuit preachers, the disciplinary punishment might be suspended. This they heartily agreed to do, and thus peace was restored, and things opened anew for better times.

But after all that could be done, it was found that the support would be very deficient. Economy itself had been economized, but still there was great difficulty in living at all. And when the year closed, the entire receipts by Bro. Mason did not come up to one hundred dollars. He could not go to conference for want of money, and wrote to his presiding elder that he would not be reappointed to that circuit the ensuing year. He packed his goods, and patiently awaited the report from the conference. Meanwhile he owed a bill in a store, which he knew not how to pay. He was in great trouble about this one morning, when a gentleman came to him, and wished a private conversation. After they had gone into a private

place, the gentleman said, "I see you did not go to conference: what was the reason? Now," said he, "I am what you preachers call a wicked man, but I have a heart, and I wish you to confide in me."

"Well," said Mr. Mason, "to be frank, I had not the means, and could not think of leaving my family with nothing to live upon, and spend what little I had in going to conference."

"Have you enough to take you away, if you are sent to another circuit?"

"I have not, but will do the best I can if I should be so happy as to get another appointment. I will not stay here another year, and suffer as I have done. I have not received one hundred dollars in all, and out of that I have had to pay house rent, and the keeping of my horse at the tavern."

"You owe Mr. W. a bill for goods, don't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much is it, do you know?"

"I do not know, and feel afraid to go and see, lest it be so large that I can have no hope of paying;" and with considerable excitement he inquired whether Mr. W. had mentioned it.

"Yes, sir, he has."

"What did he say?"

"Why, he said the Methodists had not paid you, and you could not pay him, of course; and proposed if I would pay one half, he would pay the other; and I called to inform you of the fact; so you need give yourself no trouble about that."

Mr. Mason could give no other expression to his feelings but tears. After a short time he ventured to ask how much the bill was.

"That is no matter now," said the gentleman, "and if you will agree to preach for us the night before you leave, you will have the largest congregation that ever met in this town, and it will be to your advantage. And," said he, "you must first tell the people how badly you have been used on this circuit." With this he left, and nothing more was seen of him for several days.

Mr. Mason hurried to inform his wife of the good that had fallen upon them. As soon as he mentioned it to her, the tears and sorrows of the past were forgotten, and now she shed tears of joy. She thanked God for that angel of mercy in time of need.

"Who is he?" she asked.

"Mr. M.," said Mr. Mason.

"Is it possible? Why he never goes to church, does he?"

"Not that I know of; he says he is what we preachers call a wicked man."

"I must send him a little present; what shall it be?" said Mrs. M. And studying awhile, she concluded to send him her small Bible. She folded it carefully in paper, and accompanied it with the following note:

"'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' Please accept the Bible."

"July 30, 18—"

Mrs. M. Mason.

Mrs. Mason, after years of solicitude about her own, and her husband's benefactor, in time of need, had the joyful satisfaction of hearing of his conversion to God, and triumphant Christian exit to that "better country!" She often said, "though my life is one of toil, hardship and poverty, yet, I think I have been the humble instrument of saving at least one generous soul."

In a few days, a letter came to Bro. Mason, with the joyful intelligence that a petition had come to the bishop asking for him, in — station. His wife read it with unusual emotion. "But," said she, "our clothes are not fit to go among such fashionable people, and our furniture and rag carpet will never do."

"Never mind," said Mr. Mason, "we will trust to the charity of the people, and the blessing of God, and go cheerfully."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Mason, "we will go. for there I will have a little society, and that in itself is a blessing that I shall greatly enjoy." And kissing her dear little babe, she began to sing:

"There is a happy land,
Far, far away."

The news soon spread through the village; and as soon as our friend M. heard it, he came and demanded the farewell sermon.

That evening was agreed upon for preaching, and sure enough there was a large congregation. The house and yard were full, beside as many as could stand on benches and look into the windows, the sash having been taken out.

Bro. Mason got in as best he could, and found the seats near the pulpit filled with what were called the sinners of the town and county. In due time the following text was announced: "I have fought a good fight." Mr. Mason spoke of the nature of the war in which St. Paul was engaged, and of the difficulties with which he had to contend. He applied this to himself, and stated the troubles he had met with during the past year, and the small compensation he had received.

At the close of the discourse, our friend M. arose, and proposed a collection. "Now," said he, "we want money from sinners, and a good pile of it too."

The hats went round, and the silver fell thick and fast. The result was over forty dollars. This so completely overcame Mr. and Mrs. Mason, that they slept scarcely any that night. And the good Baptist lady with whom they were staying, enjoyed it as much as any one.

Next morning, they started for their new home with cheerful hearts, and, for the first time for one year, did they feel themselves above want. Mr. M. was the subject of prayer and conversation, almost constantly; and very often would Mrs. Mason shed tears of joy, and press the face of her dear little babe to her heart, and thank God for his wonderful goodness.

CHAPTER V.

Arrival at the new home—Difficulty in getting a house—The dedication—Revival—The prosecution of two young men—Study of Law—Last Quarterly Meeting—Sermon on Infidelity.

MR. and Mrs. Mason arrived at their new home late on Saturday night, and, according to direction, stopped at Bro. W.'s, where they were received with great kindness.

Next morning, at the usual hour, the church was filled to its utmost capacity with a fine looking congregation, to hear the new preacher. Mr. Mason entered the pulpit with fear and trembling, for he knew his congregation was intelligent, and that the pulpit had been occupied by some of the best talent in the conference. And again, he reflected that that town was a county seat, and that many of his audience, no doubt, were members of some of the learned professions. The house was an easy one to speak in, and the singing was performed by a good choir. Mr. Mason preached with great freedom. His heart was glad that he had gotten among such a good set of people, and into such a good church.

On the way from church, he heard a man swearing with great violence, and calling his name. What this could mean, Mr. Mason could not understand. But very soon the mystery was revealed. It was the waggoner who had just arrived with his goods. Mr. Mason

had made every necessary arrangement for him to stay in the country until Monday morning, and was very much mortified to find him in town, on the Sabbath day, with his goods; and, more than this, to find him so drunk that he could scarcely stand. After much persuasion, the wagoner agreed to let the goods stand in the wagon until Monday morning.

This circumstance caused some talk about the violation of the Sabbath. Several brethren called during the course of the afternoon, and said that it looked very badly, and seemed unwilling to take Mr. Mason's explanation. On consulting with Bro. W., who was a very sensible man, it was thought best to explain the whole matter from the pulpit in the evening. This was accordingly done, and all passed off satisfactorily.

But to make the thing sure, on Monday morning, Mr. Mason, invited Bro. W., and a few others, to go with him to the wagoner and secure his testimony. The wagoner very frankly confessed that he had not followed instructions, and professed great sorrow at being the cause of such unpleasant feelings by his sinful conduct.

Now for a house—for the wagoner must leave. Two hours were spent in looking about, but no house could be had. This was a dilemma indeed. But a brother came to the rescue. He said he had no doubt a house could be got in B——, a small village about nine miles distant. This seemed a great way off from the main body of the congregation, but it was the only hope. Mr. Mason borrowed Bro. W.'s horses, his own

being very tired, and off he went to a village of entire strangers, and alone, to secure a house. Arriving in the village, he found the brethren so much engaged that they could not assist him in his search, nor could he hear of any house to let. He went up one street and down another, but no house. At last he ventured to speak to a man he met upon the street, who informed him there was but one empty house in the town, and that was on the back street. He kindly offered to go with Mr. Mason, and show him the house.

They passed to the back street, and found the house. The house! What was it? An old round log house, with its walls so deeply sunken into the ground that the floor was warped and raised up in several places, with a clap-board roof, small windows, and oiled paper in place of glass, and an immense stack of a chimney in the middle, which, of course, divided it into two parts. Things looked dark enough, but it was the best that could be done.

Mr. Mason left in a hurry, and by sundown had his goods at the door. The neighboring men very kindly assisted in getting the boxes into the house. Next day, things were in some order for housekeeping, and began to look a little like home.

In a few days a Brother L. called to inform Mr. Mason that he had been trying to get some one to dedicate a new church, but had failed, and wished him to do it. He said he had written to P., and to N., and to F., but neither of them could come. He said he was sorry, for these were great men.

"How large is your church?" inquired Mr. Mason.

"Oh, it's a large house, it's thirty by twenty-five feet and it will be full, and you must preach a big sermon."

"Perhaps I can't do that, and you had better look for some one else."

"No, we must have you, for we want to attach ourselves to —— station, and make a nice little circuit, and you will be our preacher."

"How many members have you?"

"Only nine."

"Are you in debt for your house?"

"No, sir, every cent is paid."

"I am glad of that, for you will not have to violate the Sabbath in begging money."

"Do you think you can preach a big sermon for us?"

"Indeed, brother, I consider myself but a poor preacher, and am certain I cannot fill the place of any of the brethren you have spoken of."

"Oh, but you must, and must go to work and study up a big sermon."

Finally, Mr. Mason agreed to go and do the best he could. When the time arrived, Mr. M. went to Brother L.'s, and was very kindly received, but very closely examined as to what he was going to preach about.

Mr. Mason concluded to gratify the brother, and repeated to him most of the sermon. This, of itself, assisted very much in making his own mind more familiar with his sermon, as well as satisfying Bro. L.

Next morning, at the usual hour, the neat little church was filled, and Mr. Mason preached with unusual power. During the discourse, signs of excitement were numerous, and, toward its close, one very prominent man of the town cried out, that he was a sinner, and must be prayed for; and rising up he pressed to the altar, and there kneeled for prayer. This created a most intense excitement, and soon others were at the altar, and still others, until it was full of anxious seekers of peace.

By this time, Bro. L. could not stand still, and running into the pulpit, and clapping Mr. Mason on the shoulder, he cried, at the top of his voice, "That's the best sermon I ever heard. Glory! We'll have a revival."

Suffice it to say that the meeting was continued ten days, and closed with an accession of fifty-nine persons to the church, most of whom were the best citizens of the place.

In a few months after this, a congregation in the country requested a protracted meeting to be held in their house, promising, that, if they had regular preaching, they would unite with the station, and assist in supporting the minister. The time was agreed upon, and the meeting commenced in accordance with the appointment. The first night of the meeting the house was filled with all sorts of persons, and, among the rest, two drunken young men, who disturbed the meeting very much. When the congregation was dismissed, those who rode upon horses found their

saddles turned hinder end foremost, and some found chips and splinters from the fence-rails set on edge under the saddle, so as to press into the horse's back, and cause him either to kick or run, or both. Others found their bridles cut, and those who came in sleds, for there was a deep snow on the ground, found their harness so cut that they could make no use of them until mended. Of course this produced no little excitement among the people, while it brought to light the fact that for years similar tricks had been played off upon people of that vicinity while at church.

The next night of the meeting, the house was again filled, and, during the course of the service, the quiet of the congregation was again disturbed. Mr. Mason referred to this as very much out of place, and hoped it would not occur again. He had scarcely spoken before two young men rose up and stepped into the aisle, and commenced dancing as they advanced to the door. They were not out long, and returning, they took their seats just in front of the pulpit, with their hats on.

Mr. Mason said nothing, but proceeded with the discourse. At the close of this meeting, and just as it was being dismissed, the two young men commenced stamping, and screaming, and swearing like madmen. No one seemed to take any notice of this as an offense, while some seemed quite amused. Mr. Mason called upon the congregation to be quietly seated, and requested the two young men to be seated also. As soon as quiet was restored, he stated distinctly, and

with great firmness, that, inasmuch, as no one seemed disposed to defend the peace and good order of public worship in that house, against such profane and outlawed conduct, he would do it himself. He stated that early the next morning, which was Saturday, he would enter a complaint before a justice of the peace. As soon as this was said, the two young men fled, and as they went they swore but the more and louder.

Mr. Mason drew from his pocket a slip of paper, and wrote down such persons' names as he expected to summon as witnesses. This done, he announced the names to the congregation, saying they would be regularly summoned in due time.

The first was Bro. B. who rose, and said he would not go.

"These," said he, "are my neighbors' boys, and I like them, and will not swear against them, for they will injure my property."

The next was Bro. L., who said he would not go, for the same reasons that Bro. B. would not go. By this time it was very evident to Bro. Mason, that the congregation would not sustain him in his proposed measures for good order. Many of the women began to weep, and some to scream, and others to scold. In due time all was order again, and the people left for home.

Next morning, about daylight, Mr. Mason mounted his horse, and went to the squire's. He found the squire at breakfast, and in quite a good state of feeling. Soon a plate was prepared, and Mr. Mason sat down to

breakfast with the squire and his family, when something like the following conversation ensued:

"I suppose, Mr. Mason," said the squire, "I know what has brought you to see me so soon this morning. It's to prosecute Jim Long and Bill Davis."

"That's my business,"

"It should have been done years ago, but no one seemed willing to do it, and I could not do it myself;" and, looking Mr. Mason in the face, he said: "Your brethren will not sustain you in this, I know."

"I presume not, but I must not stop for that. I will prosecute those two men."

"The law says five dollars and costs for such an offense; and if the parties cannot pay, or give security, imprisonment for ten days. And," continued he, "Bill Davis must go to jail."

"Here, squire," said Mr. Mason, handing him the slip of paper, "are the names of a few witnesses."

"Never mind, Mr. Mason, I will issue warrants right away for the persons, and for such witnesses as I know will do just as well as those you named, and let the church members go. I know those boys well, and have seen much of their conduct, and will punish them to the full extent of the law."

"Were you at church last night, or did you hear of our trouble?"

"I was there, but the boys did not know it, I sat back by the stairs."

In due time Mr. Mason went to the church to fill his morning appointment, after which he went home

with one of the brethren for dinner. After dinner Mr Mason retired into an upper room for the purpose of reading, and preparing his discourse for the evening. About the middle of the afternoon he looked out of the window and saw quite a number of persons on horseback, with clubs and whips, and heard them shouting "Hurrah for Bill Davis, and Jim Long!" He was at quite a loss to know the meaning of this, but was soon relieved by the information that they were out assisting the officers to capture the offenders. They pursued the boys so closely that they were compelled to seek refuge under a large rock. By means of long sticks, sharpened at one end, they punched them out, and committed them into the hands of the constable. Soon they were before the squire, who reprimanded them severely, and fined them both.

By this time it was late in the evening, and it was thought best to let them off until Monday morning, if they would give security until that time. This they did by one paying his fine and costs, while the other, after some difficulty, got a man to insure his appearance on Monday morning, at ten o'clock.

On Sabbath morning, the poor fellow met Mr. Mason in the churchyard, and, in the most penitent manner, begged him to let him off.

"I cannot do this," said Mr. Mason, "for you are now in the hands of the law for very base conduct, and you must either pay your fine or be imprisoned;" and turning away he left him to the tender mercies of his own meditations.

At the close of the service, several members of the church approached Mr. Mason in a very abrupt manner, and told him he had done very wrong in prosecuting those young men, and intimated that they would not hear him preach any more. To this Mr. Mason had but to say, "You can all do as you please, and if you will not sustain me in the defense of order and good morals, and in the defense of your church, I shall preach to you no more, and, will so state to the congregation to night."

After preaching at night, Mr. Mason made a full statement of all the facts, and notified the people that he would hold no more meetings in that house. This was a very unexpected decision, and brought many of the brethren to their feet, and, among the rest, the father of one of the young men. This man said the preacher was right, and his son deserved all he had got, and more too. This gave quite a turn to the whole thing, and the whole membership begged that Mr. Mason would continue to preach to them.

After such an expression as this, though forced by circumstances, and not by principle, how could Mr. Mason refuse? He could not, but continued his services to that people to the end of his term, with great quietness and comfort.

But the offenders, poor fellows, suffered the full penalty of the law—one by paying his fine, and the other by serving ten days in the county jail.

In due time, both of these young men united with the church, and fully confessed themselves guilty of

cutting the harness, turning the saddles, and many other disorderly acts, while they thanked Mr. Mason for doing his duty fearlessly, and published themselves his warm and fast friends. They offered to pay—the one in money, and the other in day's work—for all the damage they had done. The brethren refused this, and told them all was forgiven.

About this time, Mr. Mason became acquainted with Judge S., who advised him to enter upon a course of law reading. This kind advice, accompanied as it was with the offer of such books and instruction as might be necessary, was considered upon by Mr. Mason for one week. At the end of that time, he called upon his friend Judge S., and informed him that he would be willing to read a course of law, but not with a view of entering upon the practice.

He could not think of giving up the ministry for any other calling, and his law reading would be considered as an accomplishment, and a source of information. With this understanding, a list of books was made out, and the reading commenced. Mr. Mason became very fond of Blackstone's Commentaries, and as his friend, Judge S. was disposed to be very communicative and free in his conversation, many hours were enjoyed in conversing upon law subjects. Mr. Mason found more pleasure and profit in this than in reading.

But it was not long before some of the brethren began to find fault with the preacher for spending so much of his time in the study of law. Bro. D. said it would destroy any man's religion, for no lawyer

could be a good man. He often said he could prove this by Scripture.

"Don't you know," said he; "that the Bible says, 'Wo unto you lawyers.'"

"But," said Brother L., "our preacher is not going to be a lawyer; he is only studying for information, and that, of course, is right."

"That may be," replied Bro. S., "but it will lead him into the company of bad men, and you know that lawyers are not generally good men, and that will injure him."

"Not necessarily, and I am sure he has only kept company with Judge S., so far, and you know he is a good man."

"That may be, but it will lead to something worse. Soon you will see him sitting in the bar, and that won't be right, no how; for we are not to sit in the seat of the scornful."

"I know, Bro. D., that too many lawyers are wicked men, and that they scarcely ever treat ministers with even common politeness; but Bro. Mason will not go among them, for he knows very well how rudely the lawyers generally treat ministers."

"Well, I hope it may be so, but I really fear for him."

"Well brother, I do not, and I know Bro. Mason preaches better now than he did two months ago, so that the church is loosing nothing, but rather gaining."

"That's true, his sermon last Sabbath was the best I ever heard him preach."

"I think we had better say nothing about his studying law, for he is a reading man, and a good man, and has done us a great deal of good, and we must try to get him to stay with us longer than our preachers usually do. He has been with us two years nearly, and has more than doubled our church in numbers."

"I agree to all that, but you must remember the rule—only two years."

"That rule is wrong, and ought to be changed."

"I think, myself, it is, in many instances; but while it is in the book, it must be kept."

"True, but there is no Scripture for it, and I think there is a way of getting round it. At least I am going to try it at our next quarterly conference."

"I hope you will, and that Bro. Mason will be sent back to us, for I believe he can be useful to us for many years. He is popular with everybody, and wears well."

"That is a fact, and his family, too, are universally beloved; and I know nothing would please the people better than to have them just settle down among us, and be of us."

"Just look at other churches, and how well they get along, and why should not we do the same?"

"Just so, and while we might still keep up the itineracy, for the sake of some portions of the county, we might have the privilege of settling a man for five or ten years, where all things would be agreeable, to very great advantage."

"Let us try and get Brother Mason settled among us if we can."

"I am perfectly willing; and, between this and the quarterly meeting, let us see all the official members, and get them to agree to ask for him."

"I will, if that will do any good."

"We can only try, and I know Bro. Mason will be willing to do it, for I heard him say he was tired of moving so often, and having his family so much among strangers."

The quarterly meeting conference assembled in due time, the presiding elder in the chair. All the members were present, which was a very unusual thing. After the business was about finished, Bro. L. arose, and asked to be heard in a proposition he was about to make.

"Proceed, brother," said the elder.

"I propose," said Bro. L., "that we be left without an appointed preacher by the conference next year."

Bro. D. arose and proposed the same thing, but in another form. He said: "If Bro. L. will let me, I propose that this station be left to be supplied."

"Agreed," said Bro. L., "and I second the motion."

"What do you mean by this?" asked the presiding elder; "are you not able to support your preacher?"

"We are abundantly able, but we all want Bro. Mason, and he is willing to come."

"That will never do; you must stick to the law. Bro. Mason cannot come back to you."

"Yes, he can, if he locates, and you will give him to us as our supply."

"It can't be done, brother, and there is no use to talk."

Just here the cry, "Question! question! question!" was heard from all parts of the house.

"I can't put the question, brethren," said the elder, "and you must withdraw it."

"Question! question!" was again repeated, but the elder protested it was out of order, and he would not put it.

"I appeal from the decision of the chair," said Bro. L.

"Is the chair to be trifled with in this manner," asked the elder, "when you see you are so much out of order?" And rising from his seat, he said: "Now, brethren, if you will hear me, I will show you that you cannot succeed in this matter, even if Bro. Mason is willing to serve you for years to come." He is a member of conference, and may locate if he chooses, though I think he is more of an itinerant than to do this; but the bishop will send you a preacher, and if he does not, you know my conscience would not let me give you Bro. Mason as your supply. I am bound, as presiding elder, to keep the law."

"It's a bad law," said Bro. L., "and you ought to have no conscience about it."

"If you please, brother, I have not done yet."

"Go on, then."

"I was just going to say that old father Wesley often said that he could not profit a congregation much more than six months, and laid it down as a rule that preachers ought to be moved often. And when they are not willing to follow this good old fashioned and

God honored rule, they ought to quit. And," continued he, "I'm a Methodist, thank God for it, and will stick to all its good old rules."

"You refer to Wesley," replied Bro. L., "and I am sorry for it. We are getting pretty tired of hearing his name, when St. Paul's would do us better. Wesley was not inspired, nor was he infallible. And, beside this, it is a sad reflection on the ability and learning of our preachers to say they cannot serve a congregation more than two years. If we would elevate the standing of our ministers, we must cease this sort of talk. Other denominations will never respect us if we do not respect ourselves."

"We don't care what other churches say about us; we are Methodists, and must stick to our rules, or pride will get in among us, and we will suffer."

"We are no better than other good people, who make less noise about their religion, and have a minister among them for life. I see neither Scripture or reason for this constant change of preachers."

"Brethren, I don't like this sort of talk; its anti-Methodistic, and won't do. I can't hear any more of it; I was born a Methodist, and love all its glorious usages, and expect to die a Methodist."

Here another brother, Bro. F., entered the lists of controversy, and, as he lifted up his immense bony frame, every one was silent. He said: "I'm not much used to making speeches, but I'm used to thinkin'; I've not much larnin', but I can look at the nater and workin' of things, and I've been convinced for

many years that somethin' ain't workin' right. We've got to pay our elders for preachin' one or two sarmons at our quarterly meetings, and generally not much of sarmons at that, and then we've got to be ruled over by them in a way that's not pleasant, and can't have our way in anything. I see no use in this sort of thing, and I don't believe it's Scriptur, or just; and, for my part, I won't stand it much longer."

Brother F. sat down, and not a word was said for some minutes.

Finally, Bro. L. arose and said, that if Bro. Mason could not be suffered to come back and be their preacher, in any way, he would move that forty dollars of the missionary money be voted to make him and his wife life members of the missionary society.

Brother F. seconded this motion, and said we owed this small mark of friendship to Bro. Mason and family for their devotion to the cause of religion, their uniform kindness to everybody, and for the great good that had been done by them during the past two years.

The elder thought this out of place, inasmuch as the people had given the money for the cause of missions.

"I do hope the elder will let us alone in our own business," said Bro. L.; "I gave twenty dollars of that money myself, and I now state that Sister Mason shall have that to make her a life member of the missionary society. It won't take the money from the society, and it will be a mark of respect to our good sister.

"I won't oppose this, but will just say, be careful, brethren, and think what you are doing."

"Question! question!" came up from many parts of the house; and it was finally put, and carried unanimously. The quarterly conference then closed in great harmony, and Bro. F. insisted upon the elder's going, and staying with him, which he agreed to do. Nothing more was heard, for a few days, about the quarterly conference. But after this there was great dissatisfaction that Bro. Mason could not be returned.

Before this chapter is closed, one most remarkable circumstance must be mentioned. It is this. An elder of a vacant Presbyterian church, about three miles from one of Mr. Mason's preaching places, called on Mr. Mason, one Sabbath afternoon, and informed him of a few young men who had formed an infidel club, and were reading the works of Paine, and other infidel writers; and that they were doing some harm, not only to themselves, but to many of the young men in the neighborhood. He said that they held a meeting every Sabbath, in a store-room occupied by one of the men, where whisky was drunk, the Bible abused, and Christians cursed; and where the character of ministers and church members was discussed in such a way as to do great mischief. "Now," said he, "I just called to ask you to preach a sermon against infidelity in our church, at whatever time it will suit you best."

"I will do so in four weeks from this day," said Mr. Mason, "and you can make the appointment for 120."

"Thank you," said the elder, and left.

Mr. Mason's first work was to get Paine's *Age of Reason*, and examine it as thoroughly as he could. He got the book, and was so disgusted with its low vulgarity, that he could scarcely get his own consent to give it a public notice. He determined, however, that his sermon should be a close review of the detestable book, with a description, at the close, of the life and character of its author.

The day arrived, and Mr. Mason found the house and the yard literally packed with people from all parts of the county. He made his way with much difficulty to the pulpit, where he found a note, as follows:

"MR. MASON: The Paineites threaten violence, but let nothing they may do, disturb or alarm you. We will defend you. Read this to the congregation:"

Yours,

S. S. D.

L. W. F.

The note was read, and Mr. Mason proceeded to state the order of his discourse, showing to the people, at the same time, Paine's book, which he said he had marked, and would read as occasion required, and prove it to be false, both by reason and the Bible.

His discourse was calm, but pungent and convincing, and was listened to with marked attention, and without the least disturbance from the Paineites, though all in that neighborhood were present.

At the close of the argument, a brother arose and moved that the discourse should be repeated in the

Methodist church, upon the next Sabbath. This was carried unanimously.

The next Sabbath arrived; and with it an immense congregation at the church, the Paineites being seated at the door, and about it.

The discourse was repeated with many additional arguments, and with much power. At the close of the sermon, Mr. Mason proposed that the friends of the Bible should signify their belief in its divinity by standing up; and afterward that those who believed in the doctrine of Paine should signify this by standing up also. A short time was given for reflection, and then the call was made.

Just then the leader of the infidel club arose and wished to make a statement. His manner was respectful, and of course no one objected. Said he: "I never did fully believe in Tom Paine, and I commenced with our club more for amusement than to do any one an injury. I was raised by a religious mother, and shall never forget her. I am treating her memory badly, for she often warned me against infidels. And now," continued he, while he held up in his hand a book, "if the preacher will take this book away with him, and it's all the one of the kind I know of, I will give it to him, and promise here that I will never read it any more, and go to work this day and commence reading the Bible, and will read on until I get through." And bursting into tears, he made his way to the pulpit, and presented to Mr. Mason, Paine's *Age of Reason*. The reader may readily conclude what was the

state of feeling in the congregation during this most touching transaction. Weeping was universal, while many signified their approbation of the young man's course by saying: "We will pray for you, and stand by you as long as you remain among us." This young man, with a few of his comrades were soon found at the altar of prayer, and in the enjoyment of a good hope of a home in a better land.

CHAPTER VI.

The new Circuit—Scene in a Church—The Garden—Difficulty about dress—The Widower—Request to be removed.

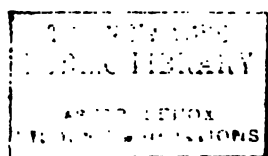
MR. MASON was appointed by the conference to — circuit. He was glad that such a small circuit was assigned him that year, in view of the amount of time he might have for study and general reading. He feared, however, that the support might be very small, and that, on this account, he might be greatly depressed in spirit. But, hoping for the best, he went onward, and was soon settled in a small log house at the extreme end of the village from where the church stood. He and his family often felt the great inconvenience of this, and especially at night, in wet weather, and in the winter. But they readily excused the brethren for putting them into such a house, and in such a place, when they learned how poorly other preachers had been provided for, and how little they thought of the real wants of the preacher's family. It was concluded, as a matter of peace and comfort to the circuit, to be just as happy as the nature of the case would admit of.

In a few weeks after Mr. Mason arrived on his circuit, an appointment was made for a Dunker preacher to preach in the church in the village where he lived. This appointment brought together a very large congregation, many of whom were members of the

Dunkerd church, and, of course, had as long beards as they could produce, that being a distinguishing mark of their religion, together with coats made in very plain style, without buttons, but plentifully supplied with hooks and eyes. When the congregation had assembled, it was found that all could not be seated in the house. It was proposed to go to another church, which was much larger, if it could be obtained. This was no sooner named than permission was granted by members of that church who were then present. In due time the young preacher was engaged in his sermon, such as it was. He dealt out error unsparingly, and was particular in his abuse of the Methodists. At the close of the discourse, Mr. Mason thought it best to expose some of the errors that had been preached, and to defend the Methodists against the very unkind, if not ungentlemanly, attack that had been made upon them. His remarks were listened to with deep interest, and responded to by many at the very utmost pitch of their voice. One man in particular, who was distinguished for his eccentricities, was long and loud in his amens. And, by the way, this had been a very wicked man in his day, but had reformed, and being easy in his circumstances, and a self-constituted preacher, though not a member of any church, he spent much of his time in going to protracted meetings, and preaching wherever he was invited. He was universally esteemed as a pious man, though very singular in his manner. Mr. Mason called upon this man to make the concluding prayer — and such a

HE DISCOVERED NUMEROUS GUNS SET AGAINST THE HOUSE, WITH STRINGS OF SQUIRRELS, A FEW OPOSSUMS, AND ANY QUANTITY OF PARTRIDGES, DISTRIBUTED SO AS TO READILY SHOW THEIR PROPER OWNERSHIP.





prayer! Loud enough to be heard a mile, and containing special petitions for the conversion of the Dunkerds, and more especially for the speedy and powerful conversion of the young Dunkerd preacher. During the prayer there was immense noise and excitement, and as soon as it was closed it was followed by very rapid singing. During the singing, our old friend made it his business to go to all the old Dunkerds personally, and exhort them to get religion. Taking them by the long beard with one hand, while the other was laid on the top of their heads, he would shake the beard with such violence, that its rapid passage through the air, made a hissing noise not unlike the switching of a horse's tail in time of flies. While he was thus switching their beards, he would exclaim in his loudest voice, and in his broken English, for he was of German descent: "Cot safe t'ese olt hart-heartet Tunkers. No religion in t'at long peart. It must be in ta heart. Your religion is all outside. Ye haf' no puttons on ye coats, but ye haf' 'ooks and eyes. No religion in 'ooks and eyes and proat-rimmed hats, ant no kallises on your trowsers." These, and similar expressions, of course, made the Dunkerds mad, while they excited great mirth in the audience. As soon as the hymn was closed, our eccentric old friend again went to prayer, and, as before, so now, he offered special prayers for the Dunkerds.

During the prayer one Dunkerd after another began to leave the house; and, as our old friend prayed with his eyes open, he saw what was going on. Then he

said: "Oh, Lort! they can't stan' the fire." They are runnin' from the speret. Follow t'em mit ta fire. Purn sin out ob t'eir hearts. Purn off t'eir pearts, unt take t'eir religion from ta outside and put it in ta insite." By the time this searching prayer was ended, not a Dunkerd could be found in the house; all had left.

In full view of a very small allowance, Mr. Mason concluded to fix up the garden fence, and have it in good order for cultivation the next spring. He carried rails from wherever he could get them, and put his fence in such order as to preserve the garden from the intrusion of pigs and cattle. This cost him much hard work, for the lot contained about half an acre, and the fence was almost worthless.

But, when the spring-time arrived, how great was his sorrow to find that the brethren had rented the lot to a brother to raise a crop of potatoes. Their reason for this was, that the other preachers had made no garden, and they did not suppose Mr. Mason would, as he seemed to be so fond of dress. Mr. Mason intimated that he ought to be paid for repairing the fence. But no pay ever came, and he had no use of a garden that season, except a small space that he got from one of his neighbors to raise some peas and lettuce, and such other things as took but little room.

Some of the citizens seeing the need of a garden and its products, for the benefit of Mr. Mason's family, very kindly furnished all the vegetables that were needed, free of cost; and, as it turned out, the family

were better supplied than they could have been from their own garden.

Mr. Mason was disposed to do all the good he could, and seeing some effect of his preaching on the congregation, he concluded to hold a protracted meeting. The meeting was commenced, after proper notice, and resulted in an accession of a goodly number to the church. These were chiefly young females who had been raised in the village, and were very fond of each other, and of Mr. Mason and his family. They called in a very familiar and friendly manner, almost every day. Soon after they united with the church they concluded to get a kind of bonnet called hood, and each to have one like the other; and to have them ready at one time, and all go to class meeting with the new head-dress. It was a very simple kind of a bonnet, and cheap, and, at the same time, comfortable. But the bonnet gave great offense. One old sister who was noted for the plainness of her dress—the shortness of its waist, and the straightness in particular, got up in the class meeting, and complained a great deal, and bitterly, too, about pride, and fashion, and curls, and new-fangled bonnets. She said she had long prayed that the Methodists would never become fashionable, but it was no use; pride was coming in, and she must go out. This most devout and profound experience, so full of good sense and meekness, took deep hold upon the hearts of the young women, and they began to think of leaving the church.

As soon as the class meeting was over, our plain old sister talked sharply to the girls about their pride, and told them they could not be Christians and wear those bonnets. "And," continued she, "if you want to be Methodists, be Methodists." This created much excitement and much ill feeling all through the village; for it was well known that when our plain old sister went from home, she dressed just as fine, and just as fashionably as anybody; so much so, that her nearest neighbors could hardly recognize her, when they saw her at a meeting twenty or thirty miles from home, or when they would meet her at any of the conferences.

When Mr. Mason returned, on Monday evening, from one of his Sabbath appointments, he found the village very much excited, and quite a number of persons at his house, and among them the young women who had been offended the day before, at class meeting. Mr. Mason was at a loss to know how to manage this unpleasant affair, so as to cure the evil and do no harm. He asked to be excused from any interference in the matter until the next morning. Consulting with his wife, and a very judicious brother whom he called in, it was judged best to visit the plain old sister, and request her to go and see the young women, and make such explanation as she thought best, so as to heal up the difficulty. This was done, but the sister was fully settled in the propriety of her course, and would do nothing. She said her face was set against pride of every sort, and she meant to put it down.

"But," said Mr. Mason; "you should be careful not to hurt the feelings of any one."

"If people's feelings are so easy hurt, I want to have nothing to do with them. I have had the blessing of perfect love for about six years, and I mean to put down pride; it is my duty to do so."

"But you should do what you think is your duty, in a Christian spirit. Now, if you think any one is doing wrong, you should go to that person alone, and tell him of his fault in a kind spirit."

"I know my duty, without your telling me, just as well as you do. And you need not talk, for your wife never goes out but she wears her veil—and it's nothing but pride."

"I will say nothing more to you, and will do the best I can to keep things as quiet as possible."

"Yes, you will side with those foolish girls, of course, and take a stand against me, though I am an old member."

Mr. Mason concluded to visit each of the young women, and encourage them to pay no attention to the good old sister, but go on and do their duty as Christians. This they agreed to do, and became quite cheerful and happy.

The next Sabbath, a few of them went to class meeting, but only to have their feelings wounded again, and more deeply than ever. On Monday morning they sent notes to Mr. Mason, requesting their names to be taken from the class-book. Mr. Mason could not do this, and called in a few of the brethren as advisers,

and suggested the propriety of forming a new class as a means of saving these young persons to the church. This was agreed to, if a suitable leader could be obtained. Mr. Mason suggested Bro. O., a local preacher, and that was agreed to also. The local preacher was called upon, and secured as the leader for the new class. This was made known to the young members, and others, who were dissatisfied. The class was soon formed, and peace was restored to the church and the community. From that time to the end of the year, things went on in the most happy manner, except an occasional thrust from our old sister with the plain dress.

But Mr. Mason had to endure a great deal of difficulty at his own house, with the constant boring of an old widower, a county judge. This old brother, though sixty years of age, fell in love with a widow in a neighboring town. The judge shaved himself unusually close, every two weeks, and perfumed himself with the finest cologne he could get, blacked his boots to the finest polish, brushed his best suit most effectually, and readjusted the Spanish bean he had fastened in the inside of the crown of his hat, selected his finest linen pocket handkerchief, put on his gloves, and then walked down to Mr. Mason's to exhibit himself, and to get Mrs. Mason's opinion of his fine appearance.

He would say to Mrs. Mason, "Ain't I a fine size, and rather portly in appearance; and then I'm judge; wont all this be a fine recommendation to the widow?"

After passing review he would mount his horse and ride off to see his lady-love. Spending that evening, and part of the next day, he would return, either very sober, and somewhat downcast, or in such fine spirits that he smiled upon everybody, and every thing. The judge was not suspected of being very pious, but finding his lady-love a member of the church, he became very devoted; went to class meeting, to prayer meeting, and to preaching, on all occasions. And what was uncommon, he proposed family prayer in the house of his married daughter, with whom he was then living.

Every time the judge returned from a courting expedition he would make no delay in calling on Mr. Mason, to tell him, confidentially, of course, of all that had taken place. This would take, sometimes, a whole day, and sometimes longer.

Mr. Mason became so familiar with the judge's face that he could always tell how he had succeeded; and Mrs. Mason, when she would see him coming, would either say, being directed by the rigidity of the muscles of the judge's face, or by their extremely relaxed condition, and by the character of his step: "The judge has had a fine time," or, "the judge has had a gloomy time." No statement of his was needed, for his face always told the story in the most impressive manner. It was quite evident, however, from the beginning, from the judge's own statement of the case, that there was no hope of success. The widow always managed to have company engaged on the evening of the judge's

visit. This he regarded, at first, as a mark of respect; but as it was so uniform a thing, he finally concluded it was not all right. And especially as he could have no private conversation with the widow, except a few words in the morning, before he left for home.

Mr. Mason and his wife saw very clearly that the judge was hoaxing himself, and, out of pure compassion, determined to tell him he could not succeed with that lady. They did so; but the judge did not take it kindly. In the course of a few weeks, however, he found, to his great mortification, that Mr. Mason and his wife were right. He received through the post office, a newspaper, with the following notice, with a very heavy black mark drawn round it.

"Married, on —, by Rev.—, Mr.— — and Mrs.— —, both of this town." The judge looked, and looked at this notice, and took off his glasses and rubbed them with his handkerchief, and looked again. It was so: it could not be denied, and running down to Mr. Mason's with the newspaper in his hand, he rushed into the house, and exclaimed: "My golly it's so."

"What is so?" asked Mrs. Mason.

"Why, the widow's gone;" and handing the paper over, he said: "Just look there; it's too bad; it's too bad; I'm ruined; I never loved a woman better in my life, and I have spent more than twenty dollars in tavern bills, in trying to get her, and now she's gone, that scamp got her at last."

"Perhaps it's another person," said Mrs. Mason, looking at the marriage notice.

"No it aint," said the judge. "She's the only widow of that name in that town." And with this the judge snatched the newspaper from Mrs. Mason, and off he went in great confusion.

The judge had made confidants of a great many persons, in the courtship affair, and, of course, had to visit them all, and show them the awful notice, and pour out his grief.

At first, this excited some sympathy, but at last it excited universal roars of laughter. And such remarks as the following, were very common. "Old fools are the worst of fools." "Anything but a widower courting." "Widowers put on such airs, and are so polite, it's sickening to see them strutting about." "Wonder if he remembers how he used his first wife."

But the judge was not to be defeated; a wife he must have, and would have. And going into his old *toilette* arrangements, he prepared himself for a protracted meeting that was being held some ten miles off. Arriving at the meeting, he took his seat near the stand, and made some very critical examinations on the women's side of the house. At last he saw a face he liked; and after meeting he took Mr. Mason aside to inquire who that lady was. Just then, the lady passed by where they were standing. Mr. Mason knew her well. "That's Mrs. W.," said he, "and she will just suit you. She has a small farm, and her children are all married and gone, except one little boy. Come, and I will give you an introduction to her."

"Agreed," said the judge; and off they went to where Mrs. W. was preparing to get on her horse. After the introduction, the judge very politely proposed to assist her in mounting her horse. And to make still surer work of it, he proposed riding home with her. This was most graciously accepted, and in two months, Mr. Mason had the pleasure of getting a five dollar gold piece from the judge, for making him and the widow one flesh.

Of course the fee was very acceptable, for Mr. Mason had secured but little money from his circuit, and then had not one copper. And of course the judge was pleased with his new wife.

The time for the last quarterly meeting arrived, and it was found that Mr. Mason had received, in all, but ninety dollars, and no hope of more. He was in debt and knew not how to pay. He had sold his old carriage and harness, and many of his books, but the price of them was gone, and still he was in debt, and his family had but few clothes, and he knew not what to do. Difficulties stared him in the face from every quarter.

He concluded that he could not go to conference for want of money, and that he could not get a poorer or worse circuit, and determined to ask the elder to send him some where else. The brethren in the quarterly conference did not like this, and the elder, to show his devotion to the work, said that Bro. Mason might as well stay there as anybody else; and intimated that any preacher could get his support, if he would do his work.

Mr. Mason had labored hard, and had nearly doubled the membership of the church, and was not willing to have it intimated that he did not do his work. All present agreed that he had worked hard.

Mr. Mason rose in his place, and said, most positively, that he must be removed, or he would locate, and that he would write to the Bishop to that effect.

Mr. Mason did write to the bishop, and was removed. But, oh! the place! the place!

CHAPTER VII.

The Mexican Dollar—The Family Carriage—The Haunted House—
The traveling expense—The pack of onions—Troubled mind.

AT THE close of the year Mr. Mason had but one dollar in the world, and he feared that some circumstance might occur, before he heard of his next circuit, that might take that away, and leave him without a penny. Days and nights rolled on heavily during the session of the conference; but at last the information came, that Mr. Mason was appointed to —— circuit, about forty miles distant. He had sold his carriage, and the price was gone; he had sold his horse to pay some debts, and to get some clothing for himself and family, and had one dollar left. With this he must pay his expenses to his circuit. What to do he knew not. None of the brethren seemed willing to take him unless he could pay them, and pay down was out of the question.

He finally determined to pack up what little household goods he had, and leave them until he could get a man on his new circuit to come for them. To this some of the good brethren objected, by saying they must have the house for their next preacher. It was determined, however, to leave the goods in the house, and, that, if the preacher came before they were removed, they might be set outside of the house, or packed in one corner. This question being settled,

the next one was, as to how the family would get off. No one could be found to undertake this, except a good hearted butcher, and he had nothing but one horse, and his meat wagon, to do it with. As this was the only alternative it must be employed. So Mr. Mason and the butcher put their heads together to fix up the meat wagon, so as to be comfortable for Mrs. Mason and her child. The wagon could easily be seated, but the question as to a cover, seemed to be a hard one. They at last concluded to get some hoops from a sugar hogshead; and make bows of them, and to fasten a sheet over these bows as a covering. This was accordingly done, and promised to be rather a fine affair. But after it was finished, and Mr. Mason became free from the excitement of inventing, and in a calm conversation with his wife, they both concluded that, as they were known by many on the road, and as the country through which they were to pass was thickly settled, they could not endure the thought of going by daylight. In this they gave way to pride of character, but more especially to their respect for Methodism. They could not consent to anything that might seem to expose the members of the church, or to cause them any mortification of feeling.

It was determined to start in the evening and ride all night, so that they might arrive at some point on the circuit about daylight.

All passed off cheerfully until about the middle of the night, when the child became very restless and sick, so much so, that they felt compelled to stop at a tavern

and take a little rest, and try to ascertain what was the matter with the little one. Mr. Mason frankly told the innkeeper who he was, and that he had paid his last dollar to the man who was then taking them to the circuit. The innkeeper said some severe things about church members not supporting their preachers better. "And," said he, "I'm no member of any church, but, Mr. Mason, you shall have anything you want, free of charge."

Mr. Mason thanked him, and said he knew it was very late, and that all the family were in bed, but if some coffee could be procured, it might be of service both to his wife and child.

"With pleasure," said the innkeeper; "you shall have it if I should wake up every soul about the house."

In about twenty minutes, some first-rate coffee was forthcoming, and after each had partaken of it they felt quite refreshed, and the child was better, and off they started on their journey in the meat wagon. The after part of the night was very pleasant and clear, and about daylight, when the birds began to sing, all were joyful and happy. Mrs. Mason was quite cheerful and the child kept up a constant scene of pleasurable excitement. It enjoyed the jolting of the meat wagon over some very rocky road they had entered upon; and none were more joyful than the good natured butcher in earning his Spanish dollar.

Arriving at Bro. S.'s, about breakfast time, they were very cordially received, and invited to an excellent country breakfast, of hot coffee, and good bread and

butter, with some nice broiled ham. After all had feasted, the butcher made his exit into an adjoining neighborhood, to purchase fat cattle, leaving behind him, however, the hoops and sheet that had so faithfully protected them from the damp air of the night before.

The all absorbing question with Mr. Mason and his wife, was a house. They inquired of Bro. S., if he knew where one could be obtained; but as he did not, he very kindly offered to do all he could to assist in procuring one. Two of his horses were soon saddled, and at the gate, ready for a search for a parsonage. It was thought best to go to the only village within the bounds of the circuit, for it was certain there was no empty house any where else on the circuit. In a little time Mr. Mason and Bro. S. were in town, in close council with Bro. F., the recording steward. The result of this council showed clearly that there was but one vacant house in all the county, and that was a large house, with sixteen rooms, which had been built for a hotel. The council adjourned to look at the house, for it was but a short distance from where they were. Brother F. had no difficulty in getting the key, and the preacher and his two brethren were soon in the house. They found it well finished and in good order.

"We can't live here," said Mr. Mason. "The rent for such a house as this will be more than my salary."

"Never mind that," said Bro. F., "you will, perhaps, be surprised when I tell you that no one has lived in

this house for several years, and that the owner only asks twenty five dollars a year for it."

"You surprise me," said Mr. Mason. "Only twenty five dollars for such a house as this!"

"Yes," said Bro. F., "and I believe, rather than not have it occupied by some one who will take care of it, it can be got for nothing."

"What will I do with it?" said Mr. Mason, "we have nothing to furnish it with; not more than will furnish two rooms."

"Oh, never mind that," said Bro. F., "just take the house, and use as much of it as you need, and let the balance go."

"What does this mean?" anxiously inquired Mr. Mason. "A house like this vacant for years! there must be something wrong about it in some way."

"Oh," said Bro. F., "the owner is a singular sort of a man, and rich, and cares nothing about renting it out for a tavern, for there is so little business done in that line, in this town."

"Is there not a great deal of travel on this turnpike now?" asked Mr. Mason.

"No," said Bro. F.; "when this house was built there was, but the pike south of us has taken the travel from this road."

"Who is the agent for this house?" asked Mr. Mason.

Brother F. said he had been acting as agent.

"Well," said Mr. Mason, "I am not quite satisfied with the house, but as it seems to be the only one I

can get, I will take it, and if I should stay in it the whole year, I can cultivate that large garden," pointing out through the back window to a beautiful lot surrounded by a good fence.

"Yes, you can," said Bro. F., "and make from it more than the rent of the house."

"All right," said Mr. Mason, "I will take it. And now I must have some one to go for my goods as soon as possible—Whom can I get?"

Bro. F. looked at Bro. S., and said: "I know of no one who can do that as easily as Bro. S. He has a good wagon and team, and can do it well."

"Not this week," said Bro. S., "but I can start on Monday, if I can get some money to defray my expenses."

"I have none," said Mr. Mason, "I gave the last, and only dollar I had to the man who brought me to the circuit."

"Never mind that," said Bro. F., "it will all be right. Just you go, and you shall have the money."

In ten days from that time, Mr. Mason and his family were snugly fixed up in two of the rooms of the big house.

"It's such a noisy, dismal, lonely house," said Mrs. Mason, one morning after Mr. Mason had been out on his circuit for nearly a week.

"What makes you think so?" asked Mr. Mason, "do you hear any noise at night?"

"Yes, indeed," answered Mrs. Mason. "The night after you left, I heard something like a man walking

about through the house, and shutting the room doors up stairs."

"Oh," said Mr. Mason, "you were a little scared, not being used to such a large, empty house; and, beside this, the rooms are very tight, and a little noise sounds like a great noise."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Mason, "I was not deceived; there certainly was something in the house, and I cannot stay in it alone any more."

"Oh, well I know it must be very lonely for you," said Mr. Mason, "and I will get some one to stay with you at night, while I am gone, until I can get time to go for one of my sisters; and this I will do as soon as I can buy a horse, and borrow a carriage."

"I do wish you would, for I do not see how I can stay here alone," answered Mrs. Mason, in her most importuning manner.

"I must leave to-morrow, in order to be at my appointment at night, at Bro. D's., and I will go now and see if I can get some one to stay with you," said Mr. Mason; and getting his palm leaf hat, off he went.

He called on Bro. F., to inquire who he might likely secure to stay with his wife at night, while he was gone. Bro. F. seemed a little confused, and suggested that, as they were strangers, it would be hard to get any one; and scratching his head, as if in a deep study, he finally named old Sister M., showing Mr. Mason, at the same time, where she lived.

Mr. Mason soon found himself in the neat little house, where Sister M. lived, and engaged in pleasant

conversation. Sister M. said she had intended to call on Mrs. Mason, but had not been well, but would do so as soon as she could.

"I just called," said Mr. Mason, "to see if I could get you to stay with my wife at night, while I am gone. She is very lonely there by herself, and, as soon as I can, I will get one of my sisters to stay with her."

"Not for the world," said Sister M. "That house is haunted, and nobody can live in it. It has been tried for years, and every family had to leave it."

"You surprise me," said Mr. Mason; "that house haunted!"

"Yes, indeed, it is," said Sister M., "and many a night have some of the men gone down there just to see, and they always heard noises like some one walking about, and slamming to the doors."

Mr. Mason did not believe in haunted houses or ghosts, but this seemed to be a strong case. He begged Sister M. not to tell his wife, for it would make her miserable.

"Not a word will I say, for you will soon find it out yourself," said Sister M.

Mr. Mason determined to search the house all through, before night, and lock all the doors up stairs, and then look out for the transactions of the night.

This he did in such a manner as not to excite any suspicion in Mrs. Mason's mind. After retiring to bed, they engaged in conversation about their prospects for the coming year, and what was the hope of doing good, and getting their support.

"Listen," said Mrs. Mason, "there's that noise again." They both kept quiet, and heard distinctly what seemed to be a man walking about up stairs and opening and shutting the doors. And the longer they listened, the louder and more distinct was the noise.

Finally, Mr. Mason determined to get up and see; and going up stairs, he found everything just as he had left it in the afternoon. Returning, he said to his wife, "All is safe."

He had been in bed but a little time before the noise commenced again, and got louder and louder, until he concluded to look again. He went up stairs and opened the rooms, but could see nothing. The noise then commenced in some of the empty rooms down stairs. He thought it was his wife, but on going down, he found her in bed, and she said she had been perfectly quiet all the time. The rooms were searched, but nothing could be seen; and what the noise meant, or where it came from, they could not determine.

They resolved to lie still, and just let it take its course; and so they did, the noise going on all night, with occasionally a sharp rap as if a broom handle had fallen on the floor.

No one would consent to stay with Mrs. Mason, and as the last resort, she concluded to stay at Bro. F.'s while Mr. Mason was away, until he could get time to go for his sister. Meanwhile it was the united belief and testimony of all, both in town and county, that

the house was haunted, and on that account no one would live in it.

Strange accounts were given as to the cause. Some said a traveler had stopped at that house, when it was a tavern, and had been robbed and murdered. Others said the landlord had murdered his wife, and buried her in the cellar. And some said the house had been a place for gamblers, and counterfeiters, and that men had been seen going in there, who had never come out alive. And still another party said the inn-keeper's daughter had strangled her baby in one of the rooms, and that was the cause.

Upon the whole, Mr. Mason concluded that he and his family would not be injured, and, that, as a matter of manly and Christian fortitude, they would stay; and Mrs. Mason, being a woman of great firmness when she concluded to do anything, fully agreed with her husband that they might stay in the house in perfect safety, though they might be very greatly annoyed.

But when they reflected upon the kind of houses they had lived in, and what was their condition then, they almost gave up the hope of being comfortable as long as they remained in the itineracy.

The first quarterly meeting came on, and when the quarterly conference was convened, the committee concluded to give the preacher the usual allowance, and his table and traveling expenses, and house rent. Some complaint was made about the rent of the house being so high, but they concluded they might as well pay it, for it was all the house that could be had.

One brother asked for the amount of traveling expense; when the bill of Bro. S. for moving the goods was presented, and the bill of one dollar for moving the family. It was suggested that part of the bill might have been saved, if Bro. Mason had left his family to be brought in the same wagon with the household goods. But, as it was, it was thought best to pay the bill, and be done with it. Brother Mason hoped that the brethren would give him some money. He said he had none, and his family were nearly out of provision, and he had been compelled to go in debt for what they had lived upon since they had been on circuit. But, alas! the money was all gone, when the traveling expenses were paid, and the presiding elder had got what was coming to him for that quarter.

After some effort, however, each brother throwing in a little, the sum of one dollar and ten cents was secured.

Mr. Mason was sad, and asked if he might not have the collection that would be taken up the next day. That was agreed to. The collection came, but it was only three dollars. Four dollars and ten cents now in hand, was all Mr. Mason had for his family expenses for the next three months.

The only hope was, that some of the brethren would make some presents, in the way of something to live upon. But no one did this, except one sister, the wife of a wealthy farmer, who brought in one day, a peck of very fine onions. They were very thankfully received, for Mr. Mason and his wife were fond of onions.

At the next quarterly meeting, however, the good sister sent in her bill for the onions, with a request that she might have a credit for that much quarterage. It was small, but still it was a credit for something. This was all that good sister paid that year.

Years of toil and privation had almost broken Mr. Mason's spirit, but still he felt it to be his duty to preach. He saw other ministers who did much less work than he did, looking cheerful and happy, and getting a comfortable support, and it grieved him. The question often came up in his mind, "Why is it that the Methodists, who are so numerous, and, generally good liv'rs, do not pay their ministers like members of other churches?" He thought, if he had a station, he might teach school, or hire as a salesman in a store, and get along in that way. His wife became desponding also, and many a night did she pass in bitter tears. They looked at their little boy growing up, but could see no hope of giving him an education, nor of having anything upon which they could lean for support in old age. Weeks of despondency, and but few of the necessaries of life, wrought deeply upon their health, and resulted in the protracted illness of Mrs. Mason, and the loss of that vivacity of spirit and elastic step, which had always been a prominent feature in her character.

Still, they fondly hoped for better times, or for an appointment near some of their friends, where they might look to them for comfort and support.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Prayer-Meeting—Difficulty with a Romish Priest—
The suit of clothes.

WHEN Mr. Mason went to his next place of labor, he was met by the stewards and class leaders of the church, and informed that a very troublesome prayer meeting existed in that congregation, and that it must be broken up.

“How is this?” said Mr. Mason; “a troublesome prayer meeting! How can a prayer meeting be troublesome?”

“Stop,” said one of the brethren, “till we tell you all about it, and then you can judge for yourself. We have a good sister here who is very zealous, and, withal, is very talkative and very noisy, both in the church and in the community; she is always in trouble about something, and is very often before the church on some charge, either for talking too much, or for something else.”

“Let us hear about the prayer meeting, brother.”

“Yes, but I wish to give you the whole history of it before these brethren, so that you may see all about it.”

“Proceed, brother.”

“Well, as I was going to say, this sister is very troublesome, and we don’t know what to do with her. She will have the prayer meeting, notwithstanding all we can do. She gets all the young female members of

the church together at her house, and she assists them in putting up their hair, so it won't fall down when they are shouting. She sticks their hair full of hair-pins, and then gets them to shake their heads to see if the hair is put up in the right way.

This is always done in the evening, just before meeting time, and when the time comes, they all go to to the class-room, in the basement of the church, and set up such a screaming, and shouting, and falling down, that all the boys in town are soon collected about the door and windows, and make use of all sorts of vile language. They can't get in, for the door is always locked."

"Is this injuring the character of the church, brother?"

"Yes, indeed, it is."

"Why don't you stop it?"

"We can't, without getting into a great difficulty in the church."

"Well, if I touch it, will it not injure me, just at the beginning of the year, and follow me injuriously as long as I am here?"

"Well, I don't know—it may; but we," looking at the other brethren, "will all stand by you." Here all answered in the affirmative.

"But, as I was going to say, they jump about in the class-room till they all get exhausted, and then they fall down on the floor, and remain there until it is very late, sometimes it is midnight. And then they get up and find it all dark, the candles having burnt

out, and they open the door, and the boys rush in and grab the young girls, and go home with them, and very often sit in the door of their father's house, or in the kitchen, until it is broad daylight."

"Have you no regular prayer meeting that these people may attend?"

"Oh, yes, but they never come to our regular prayer meeting. They say we are proud, and have no religion, because we make no noise, and they won't come among us."

"Why don't you go to their meeting, and keep them in order?"

"Well, I suppose we never thought of that; but I think now, it's the very thing," and turning to the brethren, he asked their opinion. They all agreed to it, and concluded to be there the next night of meeting.

The next prayer meeting night arrived, and, sure enough, they were all there, Mr. Mason among the rest. Of course he must lead the meeting, and in doing so he used the standard hymn book, and started the tunes himself. The slowest tunes he could think of were his choice, in view of keeping down the excitement.

The meeting passed along smoothly, until just as the benediction was being pronounced. Just then our good sister started up, in her heavy voice, one of her spiritual songs. But a few verses of it were sung before a scene beggaring all description took place. Screaming, jumping, clapping of hands and falling down. Nothing could be done to allay this frenzy, and all were compelled to wait until it would cease by its own

exhaustion. This took place at a very late hour, and the only improvement the presence of the brethren effected, was that of keeping the boys away from the door and window, and from going home with the sisters. This was thought to be quite an improvement, and the brethren were quite cheered with the hope of extirpating the great evil.

The next night of the meeting, however, none of the brethren were there, and Mr. Mason had to brook the storm alone. Before the meeting was opened in the regular way, the good sisters began singing that spiritual song commencing,

"Oh! how charming, how charming, how charming,
Is Jesus, he is."

And before the song was half finished, the people were in a perfect uproar. Mr. Mason could do nothing but look on in amazement. And often, during this meeting, the sisters would shake his hand with great violence, and ask him why he did not shout; and if he was not happy. And not only one, but many, intimated that if he had plenty of religion, and was not so proud, he would shout too. All this was hard to understand by Mr. Mason, and had to be endured for the time being.

At a late hour this scene closed, and Mr. Mason determined to have nothing more to do with it, for he plainly saw that the brethren would not stand by him, and that he must unquestionably get into difficulty, if he attempted to cure what was an obvious evil. This meeting went on for some months, and finally

broke down by a difficulty originating among its friends, and the expulsion from the church of the good sister who was its main leader.

There was a small meeting-house some miles from where Mr. Mason lived, the neighborhood around which was chiefly of the Romish order; and this meeting-house, though it did not belong to the Romanists—it was a *free* meeting house—was secured for a priest to have service in every four weeks. At one of these meetings, several Protestant ministers were present. Father O'Rafferty, for that was the priest's name, took occasion, at this time, to say very hard things about all heretics; and, to be specific, he said heretics were all the Presbyterians, all the Baptists, all the Methodists, and, in a word, all who were not in the Catholic church. At the close of his abusive harangue, he gave liberty to any one to ask questions, and promised that he would answer them.

One very rough looking man, who did not appear to belong to any church, arose and asked why the Papists burned the Bible, and heretics, and why they were opposed to civil liberty. He said he had read of these things, and wished to have some more information.

At this, Father O'Rafferty took fire, and stamped his feet upon the floor, and said it was all a lie; Catholics never burned the Bible, they loved it; and they never burned heretics, and they were always the friends of liberty.

Our friend took all this very coolly, and simply remarked that it was a bad sign to see a priest get so angry.

"You're an impertinent man. You lie, when you say I am angry."

Mr. Jones, for that was our friend's name, insisted that he was right, and that the priest was mad.

"You're an impertinent heretic, and you have spoken a lie."

"I will not be insulted by you, for I see you are a very bad man, and have a very bad cause. Now," said he; "I here affirm, and stand prepared to prove that Papists have burned the Bible, that they have burned Protestants, and that they are opposed, not only to civil liberty, but to the education of the people."

"You're an impertinent man."

"Nothing you can say will offend me. And I challenge you to meet me on these questions. Look at the Bible burning in New York, and look at Fox's Book of Martyrs."

"Fox's Book of Martyrs is a lie, got up by Protestants."

"It is true, in all it says, and it has not told the half of the wicked conduct of Papists."

"It's a lie."

"Prove it a lie, if you dare."

By this time there was great commotion in the congregation. The Papists were mad, and the Protestants were laughing at the coolness of Jones, and the rage of O'Rafferty.

Jones continued: "I press these questions, and challenge you to take them up if you dare."

"You're an impertinent man."

"But I insist on the questions, and if you are a gentleman, which I very much doubt, you will answer these questions as you promised."

"I promised no such thing."

"I appeal to the house!" and just as he said this, the people cried out: "The priest opened the way and must answer."

Here, a gentleman approached the priest and urged him to be calm, and to answer the questions. But this only made the priest's anger run higher, and he affirmed that he would have nothing more to do with that impertinent man, pointing to Mr. Jones.

"Oh, you can't excite me, Mr. O'Rafferty, I am more of a Christian, though I belong to no church, than to get angry. Now," said he, "if I were a priest, and guilty of the crime of burning the Bible, I might get mad; but, thank fortune, I'm no Catholic priest."

O'Rafferty here got up and asked if there was any respectable gentleman in the house, with whom he could discuss these questions.

"Yes! yes!" came from all directions; "here's five Methodist preachers, and any one of them is good enough to debate those questions."

"Methodist preachers, indeed; some of them are as old as their religion."

"Not quite," said one, rising to his feet.

"You're a Methodist, are you?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply, "and I am ready to discuss any or all of the questions, that have been

proposed, at any time. And," continued Mr. Taylor, for that was his name, "I will prove from history, and from the practice of the Romish church, that it is guilty of all that friend Jones charges upon it."

"I'll have nothing to do with any Methodist, for they are the very worst of heretics, and ignorant."

"But you must; and if the congregation will hear me, I will now proceed to give some facts."

"Hear! hear!!" came from fifty voices. Mr. Taylor took his place near the priest, and commenced; but before he had gone far, the priest jumped up in a dreadful rage, and vociferated "It's all a lie," and left the house.

Mr. Taylor, however, went on with his arguments for more than an hour, and so completely vanquished the papal scheme, that the people present determined that O'Rafferty should never preach in that house again. This ended Romanism there.

Toward the close of the year, Mr. Mason found himself in great need of a suit of clothes. But as he had received but a very small amount of money, and was somewhat in debt, he knew not what to do. Mrs. Mason had repaired and darned the coat, the vest and the pants, until she could do nothing more with them.

Mr. Mason saw no hope of a suit of clothes for conference, unless some young people, whom he knew to be courting, should get married, and call upon him for his services. This, however, was very uncertain, so much so, that it could not be depended upon. Every

day made the clothes worse, and worse, until Mr. Mason felt ashamed to go out of the house.

Finally, Mrs. Mason determined to make one more effort at repairing, and getting all Mr. Mason's old coats and vests together, she sat down to patch and repair her husband's clothes. She would sometimes laugh, and sometimes cry, at their limited means; and then again she would conclude it was all right.

One afternoon, while she was engaged in repairing the clothes, with old coats, and vests, and pants lying all over the floor, a gentleman called and inquired for Mr. Mason.

"He is not in," said Mrs. Mason, "but if you have any business that I can do, I will cheerfully attend to it."

"Well, I have a small account against Mr. Mason, and called to see if he could pay it."

"How much is it?"

"It is seven dollars."

"What is the gentleman's name that the money is coming to?"

"Mr. Davis, of ——. He gave it to me to collect."

"You are an officer, I suppose?"

"Yes, ma'am, but there is no cost on this account, and there shall be none if the money is paid in one week."

Mrs. Mason burst into a flood of tears, and told the stranger how they were situated, and what she was then doing to make her husband look a little decent. The stranger said he was not at all surprised, for he had heard before that Mr. Mason had great difficulty in getting along on his small allowance.

THEY JUMP ABOUT IN THE CLASS-ROOM TILL THEY ALL GET EXHAUSTED, AND THEN THEY FALL DOWN ON THE FLOOR, AND REMAIN THERE UNTIL IT IS MIDNIGHT.



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"But," said he, "you will please give yourself no uneasiness about this bill. It shall not be pressed;" and taking up his large pocket-book and hat, he left. Mr. Mason soon came in, and heard of the visitor. He knew where the account was from, and what it was for, but said he was not able to pay it, unless he could sell his horse, or some of his books.

He went to his bookcase, but could find no book that he thought he could spare. He had but few, but they were good, and such as he needed almost every day. He found four volumes, however, that he concluded to dispose of; and wrapping them in paper, he started out to make sale of them. He went from house to house, but no one wanted the books, unless they could get them at a very low price, much lower than they cost. Mr. Mason returned home without making a sale; and concluded to trust to Providence, quietly, for the future.

Next morning, just after breakfast, a stranger called very abruptly, and without any ceremony left a bundle, which he said was for the preacher. The stranger left, and the bundle was soon opened. It contained cloth for a coat, cassimere for pants, a satin vest pattern, a black cravat, a very fine delaine dress pattern, a pair of ladies' gloves, ten yards of bleached cotton, and the following note, without a name, with the bill of Mr. Davis receipted:

"Mr. Mason will please call on Mr. —, a very good tailor, and have his measure taken for a suit of clothes. The tailor is paid for making the clothes."

And in a postscript was the following:

"Mrs. Mason will please go to Mr. ——'s store, and get goods to the amount of twenty dollars."

No one can imagine the effect of this; neither Mr. nor Mrs. Mason had any idea where these things came from. They knew, however, that the officer was the cause of it; but did not suppose he was at all the expense himself.

The figuring now began as to what sort of a coat—a frock or dress-coat. Finally, a frock coat was determined upon, and made accordingly. The next figuring was as to what should be bought with the twenty dollars. All the plans were made out, and Mrs. Mason went to the store. After she had got all she wanted, there were two dollars coming to her, and she told the merchant to let it stand for another time. He asked her, in a low voice, if she had any money. She replied that she had not. The merchant pulled out his drawer, and gave her four half dollars.

In a week, Mr. Mason had his new suit, and it fitted him well; and Mrs. Mason had herself, and her little boy dressed in new clothes, out and out. They were very thankful indeed, and the more so when they concluded that the two dollars would just be enough of spending money for Mr. Mason, on his way to conference and home again. Shadows had fallen upon them, but now it was sunshine.

CHAPTER IX.

Scenes at a Camp Meeting—Publishing the Banns—The wedding—The pay—Another wedding—The pay.

MR. MASON had heard much about the great annual camp meeting, sustained by the church in the city of — and the circuit adjoining; and just as he was making preparation to go there and spend a few days, he received the following note from the preacher in charge of the circuit.

"DEAR BROTHER :

— Sept. — —,

"Many of our friends on this circuit, and in the city, are anxious to have you at our city camp meeting, to commence on —. Come prepared to preach often. Don't fail, for we desire you with us very much."

"Aff. yours,

"Rev. Bro. Mason."

"A. G. L."

Mr. Mason had been at but one camp meeting in his life; and, upon the whole, was not very friendly to them, and especially in sections of the country where churches were numerous. And his former training, being of a strict Puritanical order, led him to think that camp meetings were the occasions of much evil, and particularly as occasions for much Sabbath desecration. He arrived at the camp ground in due time on Saturday, and was appointed to preach at night. The congregation was immense, and gave good attention to the sermon, and Mr. Mason thought much good

was done. After the meeting closed, the preachers all retired into their tent, and were soon in bed.

About eleven o'clock, a great noise was heard in front of the stand, as if men were going to fight. Some of the preachers dressed, and went out to see what was the cause of the noise. They found some twenty drunken men on the stand, and under it, contending for places to sleep. They were told, that, if they would keep quiet, they might stay there, but if not they must leave. This made some of them very angry, and they threatened violence to the preachers, and everybody else at the meeting. This brought out of the tent all the ministers, with their clubs, and very soon all the drunken men were scattered ; quiet seemed completely restored ; but not so in reality ; some of the men who had gone under the stand, remained there, the others having fled ; and being somewhat cold, and, withal, very much straitened for room, they began to swear and use other obscene language. The preachers remonstrated with them, but without avail, the noise and swearing only growing worse.

At length the preachers procured lights, and, going out, threatened these vile men with the law ; but this had no effect. The only remedy now was to take them by the legs, and drag them out, and run them off the ground. While they were at this, some of the good brethren from the tents came and remonstrated with them, saying it was cruel for preachers to do such things, and urged that the men be suffered to remain there all night.

To this the preachers readily consented, if the brethren would sleep in their tent, and furnish the ministers with lodgings elsewhere. This could not be done, and the choice of two evils was left—either to be disturbed all night by profane language, or run the men off the ground. The latter was determined upon, and the men were caught by the feet, and dragged out, and then walked off from the camp ground, with special orders not to return. Then the balance of the night passed off quietly.

The next morning at eight o'clock, a general speaking meeting commenced at the altar. An immense number were present. This meeting commenced with great spirit, and promised quite a noisy time. But, alas! it was not so. One of the tent-holders—a man who always wore a shad coat, a white cravat, his hair parted in the middle of his forehead, and combed back behind his ears, and a broad brimmed white hat—arose, with his eyes shut, and his hands clasped across his breast, and commenced his experience. He said: "I'm pained, I'm pained. Oh! the scenes of last night pain me—Yes—the cruelty of our preachers." Here he groaned most piteously, and sat down.

Another one arose and said: "I'm pained too, I fear our meetin' will do no good—our preachers—Oh! our preachers are not as pious as they might be. I feel that I can't enjoy myself here, and I must go home," and down he sat with a most horrible groan.

This brought one of the preachers to his feet with an explanation; but before he was through, the two good

brethren, with many others, left, as if they were very angry.

The leaving of these persons greatly relieved the meeting of what seemed to be a very bad spirit, and it soon assumed a very lively form.

There was one man there who enjoyed it richly. He was quite a singular looking man, and just as singularly dressed. His hair was of a yellowish color, with eyebrows to correspond, and very light gray eyes, almost white, and reddish colored, freckled skin. He had on a very coarse red flannel shirt, with a yellow cotton cravat about his neck. His coat was of gray satin, very short in the waist, skirts with large pockets under the flaps, which were quite full, with pocket handkerchief in one, and his blue wollen mittens in the other. His pants were of some sort of brown stuff, and had no sort of connection either with his waist at one end, or with his feet at the other. Or, it may be that his waist was too short, or that his feet were too far from his body.

This good brother got into great agony for more light, and dropping on his knees, groaned and thumped the ground with his knees, and the bench with his fists, with uncommon earnestness. After much exercise of this kind, he sprung suddenly to his feet, and, with eyes turned upward, stood as still as a stone for some minutes. Presently he commenced jumping up and down so rapidly, that his short coat-tail could neither stay up nor down, and seemed to be driven to the alternative of standing straight out, or at just a right

angle with his body, while he clapped his hands very quickly, and exclaimed, as rapidly as his tongue could express it: "Luck at the lite! Luck at the lite! Luck at the lite! Oh! the lite I see! Luck at the lite!" This was of many minutes duration, and so completely attracted the attention of all present, that all singing and speaking was, for the time being, suspended.

Finally, an old lady arose and approached the man who saw the light; she was his mother, and as she took hold of his hand, she exclaimed.

"Och, och, Jammy, ir ye takin' l'ave o' yer sinces? What do ye sa?"

This but increased Jammy's zeal, and he jumped the faster, and cried the louder. "Luck at the lite! Luck at the lite! !

His mother asked, "Where is it, Jammy, my son?"

"Just yonder," he said. "Mother, do ye see it? it's a bigger lite than iver I saw in Irelan'. All the bog lites, an' will-o'-the-wisp lites that iver ye saw is not like the lite I see," and jumping with great rapidity, his coat-tail standing out as before, he shouted: "Luck at the lite!"

By this time his dear old mother had her arms round his waist, entreating him not to "take l'ave of his sinces." But, being stronger than the old lady, he soon shook her off, and she was compelled to take hold of his coat-tail. Holding on to this, while Jammy continued to jump, the couple presented a scene that beggars all description, and convulsed with laughter all who were present. Finally, Jammy

became exhausted, and fell to the ground, and was soon removed to a tent, where he remained most of the day.

After Mr. Mason returned to his circuit, a young man informed him he was going to get married, and wished to be published in three congregations, rather than go to the county seat for license. This young man was rich, but very stingy, and Mr. Mason, knowing what he would do, readily engaged to publish him. He did so at his next three appointments, and was the occasion of quite a merry time at each publication.

On his way home, he stopped at the house of the young bride to perform the ceremony; as soon as it was over, the groom sent a young man to Mr. Mason with the fee, one dollar and a half.

Mr. Mason refused to take it, saying that he was entitled to as much more for publishing the bans.

"This is all that was sent you."

"I will not take it."

"I will see the groom."

"Do so, and tell him that the law allows me one dollar and a half for publishing the bans, and the same amount for the marriage ceremony, and that I will take no less."

"You are right, sir."

Presently the groom came out, and pulling off his white cotton glove, asked what was the matter. Mr. Mason explained, and with some muttering of hard things, the money was paid over. In a few days Mr. Mason was called to another wedding: the man was *about fifty*—a very rough Englishman, and the woman

was about sixteen. After the marriage was over, the man came to Mr. Mason, and told him he could not pay then, but would do so in about ten days.

"Very well," said Mr. Mason, and taking his hat he left.

He told the circumstance to a young Scotchman, a friend of his, who kept a family grocery. The young man proposed to make some sport out of the circumstance, which was agreed to. It was proposed, that the first time the man should come into the store, if Mr. Mason was there, he should be asked for the fee. This was done, because the time for payment had passed, and because the man had been careful to avoid Mr. Mason upon the street.

Mr. Mason stepped into the grocery one day, and, sure enough, there was his friend. He looked quite alarmed, while Mr. Mason took his seat near the door. Finally, and when he saw nothing else would do, he approached Mr. Mason, and told him he would have paid him before, but his wife had left him.

"I did not insure her to stay with you," said Mr. Mason, "and you must pay me."

"But, I have nothing to pay with, and how can I pay?"

"But the preacher can sue you," said the grocer.

"Can he?"

"Be sure he can."

"Well, I will pay, and turning to Mr. Mason, he asked him if he would take some good pumpkins for the fee.

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Mason, little thinking that the pumpkins would be brought.

"Well, I'll bring you some in the morning," and off he went.

Mr. Mason told this circumstance to his family, who enjoyed themselves no little, at the prospect of the man bringing the pumpkins to pay for his marriage, and none more so than a very mischievous young lady, who boarded in his family.

Next morning, while they were at breakfast, a rap was heard at the door, and Mr. Mason was soon there to see whom it was. Just as he opened the door, whom should he see but his man, with a large pumpkin under each arm, and one in each hand.

Mr. Mason knew not what to do, nor where to put the pumpkins, so that his family might not see them. While he was thus reflecting, out came his wife and the young lady, filled with amusement. It was finally agreed to leave the pumpkins in the passage. The man said he would bring the balance the next day, in a wheelbarrow.

"Never mind," said Mr. Mason, this is enough—bring no more.

The man bowed and left, thinking Mr. Mason a very liberal man. But as soon as he was gone, the family began on Mr. Mason, and so laughed at him, that he was heartily ashamed of the pumpkins. If he left the house, he was sure to find, on his return, a pumpkin upon a chair in the passage. If he went to the table, *there was a pumpkin in some conspicuous place, or, if*

he went to bed, he was sure to find a pumpkin covered some where; and it seemed that if a man could be haunted with anything, Mr. Mason was haunted with pumpkins.

This little circumstance made Mr. Mason's house very cheerful for some weeks, and did much to draw off his mind from many other things of a less pleasing character.

CHAPTER X.

The first Station—Scene at a Hotel—The Choir—The shouting Sister—The shouting Brother—The Tale-bearer—A troublesome Year—In Debt.

MR. MASON preached several times at the city camp meeting, greatly to the satisfaction of all present; the result of which was that the presiding elder was requested to use his influence to have him sent to one of the churches in the city.

Mr. Mason was informed of this at conference, and objected, with all the power he had, to any such appointment; but it was of no avail to remonstrate; the decree had gone forth, and he must submit.

As soon as conference closed Mr. Mason hastened to the country to inform his wife of the doings of the bishop and elders. Mrs. Mason was distressed about the small quantity of furniture they had, and about how badly it would look, all bruised and rubbed as it was, in a house in the city; and then the rag carpet, that would never do.

Mr. Mason felt all this keenly, but then it must all be endured as best it might. A wagon was soon procured, and the household goods safely packed in it, surrounded with straw so as to save them as much as possible. Mr. Mason and his family then got into the stage and off they went to the city. They stopped at a hotel, and next morning reported themselves to

some of the brethren. During the forenoon, a good old sister, who loved all the preachers, called at the hotel and invited Mr. and Mrs. Mason to her house, to stay until their furniture arrived, and they should be ready to go to housekeeping. This was readily agreed to, for more reasons than one; but the prevailing one was a very small purse, and but little money in it.

Before they left, Mr. Mason went to the office to pay his bill. He there found one of those surly, ill-natured, conceited fellows, acting as clerk. He asked for his bill in as kind a manner as he could, but received, in return, very harsh and insolent language. He asked for his bill immediately, as he was about to leave, but was gruffly ordered to call in fifteen minutes, and it would be ready.

At this state of affairs, a large, well dressed gentleman stepped up to Mr. Mason, and asked him if he was a clergyman.

"I am," modestly replied Mr. Mason.

"Of what church?" was the inquiry.

"Of the Methodist church," was the reply.

"Now, sir," continued the gentleman, "I am a member of no church, but I have been raised to respect religion and clergymen. I am from the south, and cannot stand by, and see any man, and much less a minister, insulted as you have been by this impudent fellow, without standing by them, and seeing them righted;" and turning to the desk where our surly clerk was puffing his cigar, he demanded the bill in one minute. The

clerk still persisted in taking his time, muttering some insolent words.

"Shut up," said our friend, "or I will break your mouth."

In came the proprietor, and hastily asked the cause of the loud talk. The clerk grew pale and trembled, and attempted to explain. But our southern friend stopped him, and gave the facts just as they had occurred, stating that the clerk was doing nothing when the bill was called for, and seemed determined to be as insolent as he could. The proprietor became very indignant, and ordered the clerk to make out the bill instantly, and then to make out his own.

Mr. Mason's bill soon came. It was three dollars; but before he had time to get out his purse, his southern friend had laid down a five dollar gold piece, and ordered the clerk to give Mr. Mason the change, and walked off.

By this time the surly clerk began to beg indulgence, but the landlord would hear no excuse, but paid him up, and started him off at once.

If hundreds of just such impudent, surly, whiskered upstarts were treated in the same manner, strangers and travelers would be much more comfortable in our public houses; and hotels, in every other respect comfortable, would be much more popular.

In a day or two, the wagon arrived with the furniture, and then began the toil of fixing up. The house was large, and in a very good part of the city, but there was little to put in it, and that of a very dingy,

common kind; but it was all Mr. Mason had, and it must answer until such time as he could do better. A few weeks passed away very pleasantly; but, after that, signs of a storm began to show themselves. The choir, it seemed, had been a cause of great offense to many of the old people for years, and now that a new preacher had come, they looked to him for redress.

Mr. Mason made careful search as to the true state of the case, and finding the church about equally divided upon the subject, he concluded to let the whole thing alone. This gave the opposition party some offense, and many of them began to talk of leaving the church, and to say very hard things about the preacher. This gave the choir party some ground to suppose that the minister was on their side, and they spared no pains to make this impression. Before Mr. Mason was aware of it, he was so completely identified, in the public mind, with the choir party, that he was counted their especial friend and advocate. So high did the excitement run, that the church seemed in danger of dividing, or of being greatly injured.

To save such a calamity, Mr. Mason thought it best to advise the choir to leave the gallery, and sit on the lower floor. The choir readily agreed to this, and it was fondly hoped that peace would be restored. On the next Sabbath morning, the hymn was given out as usual, but there was no one to sing—not a member of the choir was there, and the congregation looked astonished. After a few minutes, prayer was offered, the Scriptures were read, and another hymn given out,

but no singing. Then one after another rose and left, until about two hundred had gone from the church.

"What can all this mean?" thought Mr. Mason, as he sat in the pulpit. He feared great mischief would follow, and regretted very much that he had advised the choir to come down. After the sermon, many of the anti-choir party congratulated Mr. Mason because the choir was gone.

"Now," said one old brother, "we'll have a revival."

"Not sure of it," said another, "for we have no one to sing, and a revival can't go on without singing."

"Well," said another, "we have opposed the choir, and now that it is gone, we must try and do the singing."

"Sure enough," said one, "but who will lead?"

And turning to Mr. Mason, it was significantly said: "You must start the tune."

"Never," said Mr. Mason; "you must do your own singing. You quarreled with the choir, while you knew that, without it, you could not sing; and I suppose, too, that we have lost many of our congregation. It is a shame for Christians to be fighting about such things, and you all ought to repent, and try and do better."

All that afternoon, there was great excitement among the members—some threatening to leave the church, and others saying hard things about the minister. The congregation, a very small one, came together at night, and Mr. Mason preached as in the morning, without singing. He became somewhat

warm, toward the close of the sermon, and one of the sisters, a great enemy of the choir, could stand it no longer, and sprung to her feet with a most unearthly scream, and clapping her hands, and dancing around the altar, and up and down the aisles, thanked the Lord that the choir was gone.

"It's not Methodism," said she, "and it's not religion. Good old Wealey, blessed be his name, had no choirs. It's pride to have choirs, and now we'll have a revival. Yes, blessed be his name, I feel it all through me."

By this time, a good brother, who spent much of his time fixing his hair in a particular form, began to feel happy, too; and, in order to make as much show as possible, he took from his pocket his white handkerchief, and adjusting it in his hand so that the four corners might float gracefully in the air, he began to get stiff, holding up his hands as high as he could reach.

After agonizing in this way for some time, he sprung to his feet, and shouted, "Glory! the choir is gone. I'm happy! I'm on my journey home." After running up and down the aisles several times, he fell down, in a state of complete exhaustion, upon the carpet in front of the pulpit.

By this time, an old sister in the corner struck up the song of:

"Our bondage it shall end, by-and-by,
Our bondage it shall end, by-and-by."

All joined in, and by the time it was half sung, there was something like concord and time; but

before that, there was neither the one nor the other. Meanwhile, there was an old lady who made it her business to go from house to house, and retail all the current news; and such was her zeal, connected with the choir excitement, that the amount of mischief she effected was enormous, especially to the minister and his family. Mr. Mason knew, and felt this, but what to do he could not tell. And still, this old lady would visit him often, and eat at his table, and appear as kind as one of his best friends. Her conversation at his house, was chiefly on sanctification, for she professed to have that blessing.

At last, Mr. Mason thought he could stand her lies and slander no longer; and one day when she called to see him, he called in a few friends, and opened to them the whole course of the good old sister. The friends all knew that every word was true, and united in condemning her course. She became very angry and left, with the distinct statement made by Mr. Mason, that if she did not desist from her offensive course, she should be excluded from the church as a busybody, and disturber of the peace.

Nothing more was heard from her, and it was supposed that she had repented, and was trying to do better. With this, affairs became more quiet in the church.

This was one of Mr. Mason's most troublesome years; one of toil and solicitude, both by day and night; and, withal, a year of unusual expense. The salary did not meet the demand by upward of one hundred dollars,

and, beside this, the smallpox got into his family, and nearly destroyed his wife and child. To make things still worse, the hired girl died with that most loathsome disease, which so alarmed others, that not a girl could be hired to come into the house.

But this, with similar years of toil and hardship, has gone, and there is still room to hope that a better time is coming.

CHAPTER XI.

The Busybody—The sick woman — The good friend — The unfortunate Marriage—The Separation—Death of the Bride.

DURING Mr. Mason's stay in the city he had many things to pain him. For the first time in his life did he learn how poor and degraded man can become.

He was often called to visit the sick and dying, in cellars, with nothing but dirty straw for beds; and in garrets, with nothing but the naked floor upon which to rest the miserable dying body. Misery seems to have the head-quarters of its empire in large towns and cities: nor is it confined to the lowly, and the outcast. It is in the palace, among the wealthy, the learned, the young and the old. Life may open in the morning, amid flowers and sunshine, but in the evening it may be blasted, and burning in the oven.

The account that follows may seem to show how checkered a scene life is, and how **many** are its painful complications and uncertainties. We may learn from it that,

“ The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something ev'ry day they live,
To pity, or forgive.”

Some events of life can never be forgotten; nor should we forget them if we could. But there are others that make so little impression upon the soul that they pass unheeded and uncared for.

Mr. Mason will never forget some things that transpired in the parsonage; and Mr. Leavit will never forget the St. Charles; and Miss Lucy Howard, once fresh and lovely, but now faded and dead, could think of nothing but that unfortunate hour.

Just as Mr. Mason had fairly seated himself in his study, in order to investigate the selected Scripture, as the subject of discourse for the next Sabbath evening, the servant laid upon his table the card of Mr. Leavit, who wished to see him immediately.

This was the third call at the parsonage that morning, and Mr. Mason concluded he should have but little time for study that day, and made up his mind to resume his task at nine o'clock that night.

Mrs. Jones had called before morning prayers were ended, to inform Mr. Mason of a sick lady on Tenth street, whom Mr. Mason had never visited. She said, in her usual bold tone of voice, that the lady must be visited by some minister, for it wouldn't do to let the sick go uncared for; and named three o'clock in the afternoon as the most proper time.

This Mrs. Jones clearly indicated by her manner, that she was glad to detect a delinquency in her minister, and quite pleased with herself for knowing so much more about the sick than he did.

Mr. Mason excused himself, by saying he had not heard of the sick lady, and did not know where she lived; and expressed much regret that any member of his congregation should be sick, and not send for him.

This but increased the zeal of Mrs. Jones, in pressing upon the minister her opinion, that he was not as mindful of his flock as he should be. And, beside this, she said it was the talk among a great many people, that he studied too much, and that the half of every day was not enough to spend in visiting.

"Why," said Mrs. Mason, speaking with some degree of warmth, "my husband often visits the whole of every day in the week, and studies at night."

"There it is," replied Mrs. Jones, "that's what makes him look so pale and thin. Now," said she, turning to Mr. Mason, "don't you think every minister ought to try to be popular?"

"Yes, madam," was the reply, "but not at the expense of duty."

"Now, Mr. Mason, don't begin to philosophize," was the smiling reply, "for you know I have always been plain with you, and told you just what I thought about ministers; and, beside all that, you know, Mr. Mason, that the only way to be popular, and do good, is to be always mixing out with the people."

Mr. Mason thanked her for her kind advice, and asked how long the lady had been sick, and if she had sent for him.

"Why," said Mrs. Jones, with some degree of embarrassment, "she came to the city on last Friday evening, in the evening train from the East, and was sick about eight hours before she arrived, and Doctor Dunlap said it was the ride in the cars that made her sick."

"Indeed," said Mr. Mason, "and where did she stop—at what hotel?"

"Oh, she didn't stop at any hotel, she stopped on Tenth street, at her sister's, just one square from our house," said Mrs. Jones, "and I suppose she must be very bad."

"Then she is a stranger, and has been in the city only a few days," said Mr. Mason.

"Yes, only a few days," was the reply.

"Now," said Mr. Mason, "if you please, Mrs. Jones, let us be sober, and look at this case in the light of the facts, just as you present them, and see whether I have neglected my duty."

"Please excuse me, Mr. Mason, do excuse me," was Mrs. Jones' reply, showing every imaginable sign of embarrassment. "I must go home, I've not finished my morning duties in my family."

"Not yet, if you please, for we must fully understand this whole case," said the minister, in a kind but firm voice. "It should be so examined as to determine where the fault is, if there be any fault."

By this time Mrs. Jones was on her feet, and but for the incessant tossing of her fan, her excitement would have been incontrollable. As it was, for the first time in the minister's knowledge of Mrs. Jones, did he see her give any sign of mortified feeling.

Mr. Mason, quite skilled in detecting the evil spirit which suggests such calls, and quite accustomed to such pains-taking persons, asked Mrs. Jones how she found out the lady was sick, and when she had visited

her last, and if she was dangerously ill, or getting better.

More and more embarrassed, Mrs. Jones replied to these searching questions, by saying she had not seen the lady, but had heard from her sister, in market, that she had been sick, but was now better, and that she was going to see her on her way home.

"Indeed, Mrs. Jones, and did she send for me to visit her, or did her sister say anything about me visiting her?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Mason, you know they don't belong to our church, but I thought you ought to go and see her; it would please the family so much."

"Thank you kindly, Mrs. Jones, I will go as soon as I am invited—you know it would be improper in me to visit a member of another church, unless called for."

As if to atone for her rudeness, and retreat from her ridiculous dilemma with as much grace as possible, Mrs. Jones offered her hand to the minister, with the pressing invitation to call and see her and the children, and bring Mrs. Mason along.—"You know how much we all love you, and how glad we will be to see you—do come," and so saying good morning, off went the zealous Mrs. Jones.

She had scarcely passed the corner before another of Mr. Mason's members called to see him. Hastening back to the parlor he met Bro. Davis, whom he cordially called brother, and invited to resume his seat. Hav'n't time, said Bro. Davis in his usual surly and abrupt manner, "I just called to inform you that I

heard Mrs. Jones complaining of you, in market, this morning, that you hadn't visited some sick woman on Tenth street. She talked before quite a number of our members, and I'm afraid she has done you some harm."

Mr. Mason, sighing deeply, for his heart was sick, related to the brother the facts in the case, and intimated that he feared Mrs. Jones was a misguided, troublesome woman.

The brother agreed, at once, that the present case looked a little ugly, and was in keeping with that sister's usual course, but hoped it would be all right; and drawing out a blank-book which he always carried in his breast-pocket, he drew from it a twenty dollar bill, and handing it to Mr. Mason, hastily left the parsonage.

He went directly to Mrs. Jones, and with tears in his eyes, said: "Sister, you have done very wrong; you have injured our minister's feelings, and, I fear, his influence, to some very considerable extent."

Mrs. Jones attempted to justify herself, though evidently at a loss for words; but the brother, firm in his purpose, told her she had acted very unwisely, and that she must go and detail the facts to those of the church members she had spoken to, or give him the names, and he would do so himself.

Mrs. Jones had never visited the minister, or met himself, or any of his family on the street, without uttering some word or item of news that wounded their feelings. Indeed, Mr. Mason's family had often said, while enjoying the morning: "Now we shall have

such a pleasant day, if Mrs. Jones doesn't bring us some bad news."

Mrs. Mason had often spoken of Mrs. Jones' singular way, in great confidence, to Mrs. Davis, and she, being a kind and intelligent friend of Mr. Mason's family, of course told her husband. This prepared Brother Davis for a more successful effort to convince Mrs. Jones of her error, and of the absolute necessity of sustaining the minister.

Mrs. Jones thought the minister very sensitive, and very much to blame if he did not consider her among his best friends, and beside all that, she had often said to the members that they ought to send to the minister some little presents, of anything they could spare.

While Brother Davis was expostulating with Mrs. Jones, and urging her to have more kind respect for the minister, Mr. Mason was on his knees in his study, imploring his heavenly Father to give him patience and gratitude, and to concentrate his mind on the great subject of his Sabbath evening discourse. He said to himself: "My mind is so distracted: how can I study?"

But knowing what efficacy there was in prayer, he continued his supplications, and just as he began to realize the preparation of his mind for the duty before him, and while in the act of constructing the first sentence of his sermon, the card of Mr. Leavit was laid before him.

Mr. Mason returned Mr. Leavit's card, with his compliments, and an invitation written on the back

of it, for Mr. Leavit to walk up to the study. He hoped by this course to save himself from a very long call, and also from the fatigue of going up and down stairs so often. Mr. Leavit entered the study with his usual elegance and dignity, where he was cordially received by Mr. Mason, and seated in a large arm-chair. A little conversation revealed the fact that Mr. Leavit was of a highly-respectable family of the North, with whose character Mr. Mason was very familiar.

"It was your brother, I suppose, who was at college while I was in the seminary, in the East," said Mr. Mason, believing he saw some likeness in the person present.

"That was my eldest brother. He afterward studied medicine, and died in Philadelphia, while attending lectures," said Mr. Leavit, in a very subdued voice.

These items of history gave an ease, and a scope to the conversation, which made the minister and Mr. Leavit appear as old and familiar friends.

Mr. Mason's heart had grown quite cheerful, and his study had less of gloom in it than for hours before. And what added much to the minister's comfort was the delicate and manly remark of Mr. Leavit, that Mr. Mason stood high in the affections of his people, as a useful and faithful pastor. This, said he, "I learned from numerous persons, but especially from Miss Lucy Howard."

"Lucy Howard!" said Mr. Mason; "how in the world did you form her acquaintance so soon? She

is one of the most lovely and highly-educated young ladies of the city, but she is very retiring, and reserved. And I wonder at this, too, continued the minister with evident feelings of kindness; "for she has been a great deal in society."

"Oh!" said Mr. Leavit, with quite a flush on his face, "our introduction was rather informal, and we have been acquainted but a few weeks. And I readily agree with you, Mr. Mason, that Miss Lucy is a lovely and charming young lady."

"You may readily conclude how sincere I am," continued Mr. Leavit, "when I inform you that next Wednesday evening, at nine o'clock, is set apart for our marriage."

"Why, you surprise me, and please me too," said Mr. Mason;—"you and Miss Lucy to be married on Wednesday evening!"

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Leavit, "and Miss Lucy sends her compliments, and wishes you to meet us in the ladies' parlor of the St. Charles, at the time I have specified."

"With the greatest of pleasure," said Mr. Mason, "and I hope you and Miss Lucy will pass a life of bliss."

Little did the good man think of the sequel. That was a singular morning in the history of Mr. Mason—sorrow and joy united; but while the sunshine of joy had dispersed the clouds of sorrow from his soul, still it was sore from the blows Mrs. Jones had inflicted early in the morning.

As Mr. Leavit was leaving the study, he deposited in Mr. Mason's hand, an elegantly-wrought purse containing several pieces of gold, saying at the same time, that Miss Lucy and himself would leave in a few days after their marriage, for the East, and that they would remain at the St. Charles until that time.

"But," inquired Mr. Mason, "what am I to understand by your invitation to the St. Charles; Mrs. Howard, certainly, has been consulted in this matter, and, I hope, makes no objection to your marriage at her own house?" This question was proposed in great kindness, and to elicit from Mr. Leavit an explanation of what appeared to be strange circumstances in the case. He did this, too, in view of some peculiarities in Mrs. Howard's character. Two of her daughters had been married a short time before, and although they married well, in every respect, yet the old lady was disposed to complain.

"She is just like many others in the world," said Mr. Mason, "who become singularly excited when any of the children are married, no matter how well the parties may be suited, or how well she may be pleased herself."

"That is a matter that cannot be explained now," replied Mr. Leavit, "although I have heard of no objections from Mrs. Howard."

"Do you know Mr. Holmes?" asked Mr. Leavit with a glance of pleasantry.

"Yes, sir," was the inquiring reply; "a fine young man, too."

"That's enough, for the present," said Mr. Leayit; "all I have to say now is, that it is Miss Lucy's request that the St. Charles be selected as the place of our marriage;" and reaching his hand to Mr. Mason, he hastily left the study.

The good and cautious minister, once more left alone, carefully reviewed the singular events of that morning. "There is Mrs. Jones," said he to himself; "that singular, and much mistaken woman; will she never cease to harass and injure my feelings, and, perhaps, my reputation? But she is over-zealous, and, withal, very ignorant. Poor thing, I forgive her. And there is Brother Davis, how kind he is, although a little rough in his manner. I love him for his blunt good sense, and prudence."

Then taking his new purse from his dressing-gown pocket, and counting its golden contents, he was no less surprised than pleased, to find that the morning had increased his little funds to just seventy dollars more than he had the night before.

"Surely our heavenly Father is good," ejaculated his glad heart:

"Behind a frowning Providence,
He hides a smiling face."

Leaving his study hastily, for the possibility of study had fled, Mr. Mason stepped down to the room of his good lady to report his good fortune, and looking as dejected as he could, for he often amused himself at Mrs. Mason's expense, he sat down without saying a word.

After some moments of silence, Mrs. Mason looked with inexpressible kindness upon her husband, and asked what was the cause of his sadness.

"Enough," said Mr. Mason; "there's Mrs. Jones, and there's Brother Davis, and then that stranger who has just left my study."

But the lady, who was listening attentively, detected a roguish smile on the pale face of her husband, and immediately suspected some pleasantry. Mr. Mason betrayed his intention by a hearty laugh.

"What pleases you?" inquired Mrs. Mason, in a half-hesitating manner, for she could not tell what was coming.

By this time, Mr. Mason had the new purse, carelessly tossing it from one hand to the other, and had said something about the St. Charles' wedding.

"What do you mean about the St. Charles' wedding?" asked Mrs. Mason.

"Why, Miss Lucy Howard and a Mr. Leavit are to be married there, on next Wednesday evening."

"You surprise me," was the reply.

"It is even so," said Mr. Mason.

Rising to her feet, and looking unusually interesting, with her eye on the purse, Mrs. Mason said: "Now, Mr. Mason, that's my money, for, you know, you promised me all the marriage fees. There's Brother Davis's twenty, that will be enough for you. Now I can get a nice silk dress for myself, and a new suit for the boy, and a great many little things I need."

Mr. Mason, seeing his wife's growing confidence and joy, attempted to put the purse in his pocket, though not really intending to do so, when Mrs. Mason sprang at him and wrested it out of his hand, and ran into the parlor, laughing right heartily that she had secured the prize, purse and all.

The next Sabbath morning, after the services, several of Mr. Mason's members met him in the aisle of the church, to inquire if he had visited that sick lady on Tenth street.

Brother Davis, suspecting what the matter of conversation might be, hastened to the place, and, as soon as he heard what was said, relieved the minister by giving a full statement of the whole matter. He said the lady had been a little sick from riding in the cars, but had soon recovered, and left the city; and that Mrs. Jones was very sorry for acting so very unwisely as she had in this case.

This gave so much satisfaction to all parties, that they left the church with glad hearts, and none more so than Mr. Mason, for the kind, sweet offices of love,

"Were to him as needful, as his daily bread."

On the next Wednesday evening, at precisely half past eight, a carriage stopped at the parsonage, to convey Mr. Mason to the St. Charles. Arriving at the hotel, Mr. Mason was very politely conducted to the splendidly-lighted and furnished ladies' parlor, where he was seated in a large chair, just opposite the door which opened into a side room. Scarcely was he seated ere he received the following note:

"Mr. Mason will please remain seated where he is, until the opposite door opens, which will be the signal for him to rise to his feet, to receive the parties for marriage.

"WILLIAM and LUCY."

Few persons only were present, but they were of the most fashionable and wealthy of the city. There was one absent, who on former occasions, had been the constant companion of Miss Lucy Howard. That one was alone, and sad, perhaps contemplating an exile of himself from all human society; or he may have been asking the question with the author of *Paradise Lost*:

"Oh, why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven,
 With spirits masculine, create at last
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature?"

Poor Holmes! there's no telling what were the agonies of his soul that evening.

Mr. Leavit was his superior in family, in wealth, and in personal accomplishments, and had moved in the most refined society from his boyhood. Young Holmes had but few such advantages, though universally beloved for his morality, his love for his aged parents, and for his fidelity to business.

Just at nine o'clock, the door into the side room was thrown open, when Mr. Mason rose to his feet, together with all present. In a moment more, and four persons presented themselves before Mr. Mason — the attendants, and Mr. Leavit, bearing upon his arm the lovely Lucy Howard.

After a pause of great significancy, the silence of breathlessness obtained all over the room, when the minister said: "Let us pray;" and lifting his hands in his usual solemn and impressive manner, implored a blessing upon the two persons present, and most fervently commended them to the protection and care of the Almighty. The prayer ended, the ceremony proper commenced, and progressed to the solemn covenant words, "Do you both promise to live together as husband and wife, according to the rules of the married relation, as contained in the Scriptures of Truth?"

This question more than ever impressed the hearts of all present, and in place of the gay, heartless smile, there was a subduedness of expression that plainly told how important is the relation of husband and wife. The response was pronounced in a low but distinct voice by Mr. Leavit; "I will:" and in a graceful bow of the head by Miss Lucy. In further testimony of this covenant, their right hands were joined together, when the minister again lifted his hands, and said, "I do now pronounce you husband and wife, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Seated on the sofa, which had been reserved for that purpose, Mr. and Mrs. Leavit received the usual salutations, kisses and blessings, and very soon the room was in an uproar of laughing and talking—the newly married couple enjoying it as fully as any present. Meanwhile, here and there little groups of two or

more, might be heard discussing the dress question of Mr. Leavit and Miss Lucy.

"Oh," said one, "wasn't she perfectly beautiful?"

"Yes, and so perfectly neat and plain—no jewelry, no rings, not even a breastpin," said another.

Miss Lucy was dressed in plain white satin, with a richly-wrought white veil thrown loosely but elegantly over her head, contrasting finely with her jet-black hair, and large oriental eyes.

Mr. Leavit was dressed in black, with an elegant white satin vest, but neither fob-chain nor rings. His hair was not hanging in long, dangling tags at one side of his head, but left more to the elegant adjustment of nature, while it was just the right length to keep its proper place. His chin was without the enormous bunch of hair; no sign of idiocy appeared on his upper lip, while a pair of neat black whiskers ornamented his cheeks. In a word, all agreed that they were both dressed in fine taste, so becoming to persons of a refined Christian education.

One thing, however, was a matter of some surprise and inquiry. Often had Mr. Mason been asked what he thought of the propriety of having the wedding at the St. Charles. One said: "Why did they not go to the Church?" and another said: "Why was Lucy married here, and not at her mother's?" Mr. Mason could not answer all these queries, but supposed the whole thing was susceptible of explanation.

One there was who was not satisfied: she insisted that it was at least very strange. "And then," said

she, "Lucy's mother is not here." This one was in very peculiar circumstances in life—neither very old nor very young; not less than forty nor more than sixty—just at the age to be very nice about things, and to be very nervous, withal, if she did not know the whys and wherefores of all that passed.

"Oh, it's so convenient to be married in such an elegant hotel as this," said one, while another thought it "so little trouble." All agreed that Lou. Howard had the credit of introducing a new fashion of getting married.

The morning papers announced the marriage, and great was the excitement and astonishment of Miss Lucy's friends, to learn that she had married Mr. Leavit, in place of Mr. Holmes. Servants came from all directions, with notes of inquiry, whether Mrs. Leavit would receive calls at the hotel, or at her mother's. To all of these, there was but this reply: "At the St. Charles."

At eleven o'clock, groups of from four to six ladies and gentlemen were seen on their way to the St. Charles, while others were returning; and it was evident, from the number of private carriages at the hotel, that something unusual had occurred.

But little else was heard but blessings on the newly-married couple, with regrets that they would so soon leave the city.

That interesting maiden lady, who had been at the wedding, the night before, had herself conveyed to Mrs. Howard's, early in the forenoon, to make diligent

search for the cause of the wedding at the St. Charles.

"It looked so strange," said she, "that I thought I must ask you why it was. Did you oppose it?" was the very searching inquiry, "or what in the world did it mean?"

Mrs. Howard was a fleshy lady, and like all others of similar corporeal dimensions, was cheerful and good-natured; and while Aunt Peggy, for that was the name by which she was known, pressed to know the reasons of such a strange course, she only received the reply: "It was Lucy's desire."

"Sure," said Aunt Peggy, looking as if she had not got hold of the fact yet, "and was that all?"

"Yes, ma'am," was the good-humored reply.

"Well, indeed, Mrs. Howard, I thought it strange, and may be that all wasn't right with young Holmes. I didn't know what to think, for, you know, you were not pleased when your other daughters were married—so I heard."

This touched Mrs. Howard in a tender place, and she said: "That is very true, but Lucy always said she would get married from home; beside that, I am not opposed to Mr. Leavit, although he is a stranger; but, on some accounts, would rather, if it had been Lucy's choice, that she would have married Mr. Holmes, so that she might live near me. But, I suppose, Aunt Peggy, it is all for the best; it's decreed, and it must be so."

Looking very grave, for Aunt Peggy believed in decrees, although she seemed to be a reprobate, she

sighed, and said: "It must be so; strange things will happen, and we don't know what the hidden decrees are, till they are revealed to us."

"But aint you going to see Lucy before she leaves?" said Aunt Peggy, determined to have a revelation of secret decrees.

"No, Aunt Peggy, I am not very well, and you know I am so heavy, it's hard for me to get about, but Lucy and Mr. Leavit will be up to-morrow, or next day, and I am ready to receive them at any time."

Aunt Peggy began to adjust her shawl, and said she must go, for she wanted to call at Mr. Mason's.

On Friday afternoon, Mr. Leavit was so much engaged with some gentlemen from the East, that he could not leave, and Lucy had to ride up in the carriage, alone, to see her mother. Light-hearted and cheerful, she ran into her mother's room and kissed her, saying she was so glad to get home out of the excitement and confusion of that immense hotel.

"Indeed, Ma," said she, "I am almost worried to death with so many calls."

"Don't say that," said Lucy's mother, "for, you know, you have many kind friends, and they, of course, wish to see you; and you know, too, that your novel manner of getting married must attract some attention."

"Oh, I wish," said Lucy, "I had been married at home, but you know, Ma, I thought it would be so much trouble to you, and then Mr. Leavit seemed to prefer the St. Charles, just because it would be a little

odd, he said, and because he wanted to differ from the old monotonous course—you know he's a little romantic in what he does. The bell rang, and very soon the servant announced Mr. Holmes in the parlor.

"Good gracious," said Lucy, "what will I do? Ma, how can I see him? It will kill me," and she became pale and nervous.

"Now, Lucy, do behave yourself; what need you care for Mr. Holmes?" said her mother.

"Oh, Ma, you don't know all!"

"Why, Lucy, what do you mean?"

"Can't tell you now," and she grew still more and more agitated. "It's too bad to tell you, and I'm such a sinner, and so unkind to Mr. Holmes. Oh, how can I see him."

"Why, Lucy, you need not go to the parlor unless you wish, for I don't suppose he called to see you."

"Oh, yes, he did, Ma, I know he did; but, oh, what shall I do? I am so very miserable?"

"Call the servant," said Lucy, "and ask who Mr. Holmes called for."

The servant soon came, and said: "It was Miss Lucy."

"How did he look, Bet?" inquired Lucy.

"Why he's been sick, from his looks," said Bet.

With that, Lucy burst into tears, and rushed into the back parlor, and threw herself upon the floor.

Mrs. Howard, not knowing exactly what to do, concluded she would go to the parlor, and tell Mr.

Holmes that Lucy could not be seen just then, and request him to call again.

This she did; but Mr. Holmes said he must see Lucy once more before she left. "I must see her now," said he, and inquired where she was.

Just then, Mrs. Howard was called into the back part of the house, and as soon as she left, the door into the parlor was opened very suddenly, and there stood Lucy, bathed in tears, and exclaiming, "Oh, Mr. Holmes, do forgive me, do forgive me, or I shall die."

Mr. Holmes sprang forward and pressed Lucy's hand, saying, "Yes, I forgive you, but you know, my dearest Lucy, I can never forget you."

Lucy's excitement had well-nigh exhausted itself, and becoming more calm, she seated herself on the sofa, while Mr. Holmes was seated on a chair near-by.

"And so you are married?" said he, "and have in that act violated the most sacred and binding vows to myself."

"I'll never, never forsake you," said Lucy; "I can never love Mr. Leavit any more. Do you," continued she, "hold me to the promise I made you, and so often repeated?"

"Most assuredly I do," replied Mr. Holmes, "but let me assure you, I shall do nothing against Mr. Leavit, for I think him a gentleman, and suppose he was entirely ignorant of our engagement."

"I never told him," said Lucy, "but I ought to have done so, and discouraged his visits."

Lucy returned the carriage to the hotel, with a note, stating that she could not be there that night, and requesting Mr. Leavit to call up the next morning.

Mr. Leavit read the note with some surprise, but concluded, at last, that all was right, and put the note in his pocket. The next morning, just as he was about leaving the hotel to visit Mrs. Howard's, and bring Lucy back, if she desired to come, he received the following:

"DEAR MR. LEAVIT:—I am inexpressibly sad this morning—was almost frantic all last night. I failed to inform you, previous to our marriage, that my heart was already pledged to another. That one I met in Ma's parlor yesterday evening. I feel that my affections have, for several years most ardently entwined themselves about his heart. What shall I do? Meet us at Ma's, at three o'clock. Do, Mr. Leavit. Don't deny me this favor. It may be the last I shall ask of you.

LUCY.

"Saturday morning."

When Mr. Leavit read this most singular and unexpected letter, he grew pale, and well-nigh fainted. The gentleman who had roomed with him the night before, observing the sudden change in his countenance, kindly inquired if he was sick, or if he had heard bad news. "Bad enough," said Mr. Leavit, and hurriedly left for his room. Locking the door, he carefully read the letter once more, and concluded it must surely be a mistake.

"This is not Lucy's letter," said he to himself; "it is not her handwriting."

At that moment he thought of a piece of original poetry, in his trunk, which he knew to be Lucy's

handwriting. After some searching, the poetry was found, and when compared, it revealed the fact that the letter was from the same hand. Mr. Leavit's feelings were wrought up to the highest degree of excitement, but being accustomed to do nothing rashly, he determined to do no violence to himself or any one else, but quietly await the appointed hour, and comply with what Lucy said might be her last request.

No sooner had he settled down upon this plan of procedure, than he felt his heart had lost all its love for Lucy, and that nothing remained but what might be called a cold and careless remembrance of the fact that such a being lived. At the designated time, Mr. Leavit was promptly at Mrs. Howard's. He and Lucy met with as much formality and indifference as if they had scarcely known each other. As soon as they were seated, Mr. Leavit assured Lucy that he was perfectly calm, and wished her to confide in his honor, that he would neither shed tears, use harsh words, nor indulge in any act of violence.

"Lucy," said he, "I did love you, as you very well know, but I do not love you now."

"That is just as I feel, too," said Lucy, "and I am truly glad it is so. But I must confess," she continued, "that I have done you great injustice. I have deceived you, and I have deceived Mr. Holmes."

"Don't reproach yourself," said Mr. Leavit, "for I do not; if we do not love each other, that, of itself, is a sufficient reason for our separation, if you desire it."

"I scarcely know what to do," said Lucy, "for I am greatly embarrassed indeed. I should have been more candid with you at first, and told"—

Just then, the servant opened the door, and in stepped Mr. Holmes.

Lucy rose to her feet, but immediately fainted, and fell back into her chair, and great was the consternation of the two gentlemen present, who had never seen each other before.

After Lucy had fairly recovered, she introduced Mr. Holmes to Mr. Leavit. This little ceremony over, all resumed their seats, but it was to sit in profound silence.

Each seemed to think it was the duty of the other to introduce the subject. Minutes seemed like hours and every succeeding minute but more and more increased the embarrassment.

At length Mr. Leavit drew from his pocket the note he had received from Lucy, and asked her if this was the gentleman referred to in the note.

Lucy withdrew her hand from her face, and bowed assent.

Mr. Leavit handed the note to Mr. Holmes, who looked it over with great care, and then returned it, saying, "That note speaks the truth."

"I am willing to abide by it," said Mr. Leavit, "but one thing I wish to be distinctly understood."

"What is that?" interrupted Lucy.

"And you, Lucy, will bear witness, that my hands are clear from all stain in this whole matter, and I bear testimony that so is my heart."

‘Yes, Mr. Leavit, it was I. Oh, it was my unfortunate concealment of what you ought to have known,’ cried Lucy.

Mr. Leavit looked upon the whole scene as one of intense interest, while he could not suppress a rising contempt for the base conduct of Mr. Holmes, in submitting to such a meeting; and, rising to his feet, he made the subjoined statement:

“From this note, I learn, that you two have been promised to each other for years, and that you still love each other, and are disposed to indulge and cherish this affection. This is the relation existing between you two, the same that, I supposed existed between Lucy and myself, in addition to which there was the obligation of a legal marriage. But one thing binds us now—the law. How shall we be freed from its obligations?”

“That,” said Mr. Holmes; “appears to me a very small matter, compared with the obligations long resting between us.”

“So it may appear to you,” said Mr. Leavit, “but to me it is the only, and the most serious difficulty in the way. Remove that, and I am free—honorably free.”

Mrs. Howard was called in, who, rather than assume any responsibility in the matter, advised the parties to consult with Mr. Mason, or with some attorney, expressing the opinion that, if anything could be done, it should be done soon, so that the whole matter might be ended. Mrs. Howard’s best friends were shocked at her apparent want of a mother’s

interest in this most afflicting case of her daughter, and none were more so than Aunt Peggy, who more than thought she was certainly beside herself.

Quite early on Sabbath morning, who should step into the parsonage but Mrs. Jones, and Aunt Peggy; Mrs. Jones was quite out of breath, and urged to see Mr. Mason immediately—"Just a moment."—"Mr. Mason is quite engaged in his study this morning, he was pressed with calls yesterday, and" —— said his wife.

"Oh, but we must see him, just a moment," ejaculated Mrs. Jones. "Call him down, we won't keep him long."

"Just a few minutes," said Aunt Peggy, in a tremulous voice.

"Do excuse him till after service, if you please, for I know he is very busy, and it will take him till church time to get his sermon ready—do excuse him," said Mrs. Mason.

Mrs. Jones said he might take an old sermon, and insisted upon seeing him.

Mr. Mason was called down, and had scarcely seated himself, when the two old ladies began the story of Lucy Howard. "Never mind, ladies," said the minister, "I heard the painful account of this matter last evening, I'm in a great strait, this morning, in my preparations for the pulpit—will you please excuse me?"

"But you didn't hear how badly old Mrs. Howard is acting, did you?" said Mrs. Jones.

"I suppose," replied the minister, "the dear old lady does not know what to do. It is a very trying case; very uncommonly afflictive."

"I think she should be suspended from privileges; what do you think?" was the grave judgment of Aunt Peggy.

Mr. Mason had nothing to say in the matter, but urged the necessity of being in his study, and bidding them good morning, left them with his good lady to entertain them as best she could.

"What a strange man our minister is," said Mrs. Jones, "he never gives a body any satisfaction."

"That was not the way with our other minister," said Aunt Peggy, "he always was willing to hear what one had to say."

"But I learn that he had a great many difficulties in the church," said Mrs. Mason, "and that was one of the reasons of his dismissal."

"Let us go," said Mrs. Jones, and both the ladies left, giving signs of ill temper.

Just as they passed the door, Mrs. Mason heard them say they would hear Mason preach no more. She could not help smiling, although her feelings were somewhat disturbed. About the middle of the forenoon, on Monday, Mr. Leavit and Mr. Holmes requested to see Mr. Mason in his study.

When seated, Mr. Mason, in as delicate a manner as possible, referred to the difficulty, and began to expostulate with Mr. Holmes on the great impro-

priety, and sin, of his course, and what must be the consequence.

"It's no use to talk in that way," said Mr. Leavit, "my mind is made up; I am convinced it would be wicked for me to attempt to live with Lucy Howard, under the circumstances."

"But let us try to change the circumstances, and make the best disposition of the sad affair we can," replied Mr. Mason. "You know," said he, addressing Mr. Holmes, "that Lucy and Mr. Leavit were lawfully married; and that the law of Moses recognizes but one reason why persons lawfully married should be separated. That reason does not exist in this case, and therefore they cannot be parted. Lucy greatly erred, as too many do in similar cases," continued the minister, "in not frankly stating her engagement to you in the first place, but that is no reason why you should make her error your greatest sin. As soon as you heard of her marriage, you should either have left the city, or avoided any contact with her, or any visit to the house where she was. Manliness and prudence, as well as a just regard for morality and religion, would certainly have dictated such a course."

"I regard him as no better than a dog, and wholly unworthy of respect," said Mr. Leavit, "and wish to get rid of him and all his friends as soon as possible."

"You must not say so," said Mr. Mason, "for you know there is nothing gained in haste in as grave a matter as this."

"Can't you advise some course that will secure my prior right?" asked Mr. Holmes with all the simplicity of an artless child, who knows nothing but the gratification of itself.

Mr. Leavit sprang to his feet, and asked Mr. Mason for the name of the most distinguished attorney in the city. Mr. Mason quoted to him this passage from Shakspeare's Henry the Fifth :

"Marriage is a matter of more worth
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship."

"Poetry is not the thing I want now," continued Mr. Leavit, "I must have legal advice," and looking at Mr. Mason, he said : "I fully appreciate your course; it is the only one you can take, and be consistent with your office as a clergyman. Do give me the name of some good attorney."

As soon as Mr. Mason wrote on a card the name of H. W. Lewis, Esq., Mr. Leavit said to Mr. Holmes, "Let us see him immediately. Where shall we find him?"

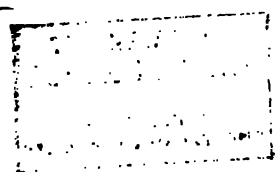
Getting the proper street and number, both left the parsonage.

"Nothing immutable but God," thought Mr. Mason. "How changeable is man, and full of trouble! What desolation and sorrow among three promising youths."

Every eye was fastened upon Leavit and Holmes as they quickly bent their way to Mr. Lewis's office. Some said : "Leavit is a coward, or he would shoot Holmes;" while others, with less tenacity for the law



THE DOOR FLEW OPEN, AND TWO MEN, WITH FAST HOLD OF EACH OTHER'S BODIES, FELL THEIR WHOLE LENGTH IN THE AISLE. THIS PRODUCED GREAT EXCITEMENT AMONG THE PEOPLE —WOMEN SCREAMED, AND MEN RUSHED TO THE DOOR, BOTH FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT.



that governs gentlemen, proposed that, "some friends take it upon themselves to adjust the whole affair."

After hearing all the facts, Mr. Lewis said it was a hard case, and he knew of but two courses to be pursued. "One is, you may leave your wife, and in course of time she may apply for a bill on the plea of desertion, and if successful, she, of course, will have the right to marry again. The other is, you and your wife may mutually enter into bonds of separation, in which you bind yourselves to avoid each other's society, and to relinquish all claims to whatever of property may be coming from each other's parental estates, or from any other direction."

"Will you draw up such bonds, with their duplicates?" said Mr. Leavit, "and I will pay you well."

"But each of you must have a certificate of marriage from the officiating clergyman," said Mr. Lewis.

"That can easily be obtained," said Mr. Leavit. Leavit and Holmes left the office, to lay the case before Lucy and her mother. No sooner was it proposed, than Lucy readily consented to sign such a bond, and Mrs. Howard agreed to let Lucy take her own course, as she had done from the first. The certificate of marriage was soon obtained, and deposited with Mr. Lewis.

At five o'clock in the evening, a close carriage stopped at the office of Alderman Steele, where the parties signed articles of mutual separation, which were duly certified by the officer, and delivered to the couple as their future guarantee against any trouble,

Lucy and Holmes took their seats in the carriage, where Leavit shook hands with them, wishing them all possible happiness, and left for his room in the St. Charles.

Lucy and Holmes, lost to every claim but that which their affections had upon them, and which had grown with their years, supposed themselves free once more, to enjoy the delights and pleasures of mutual affection, which had been their bliss for many years before.

"How indefinable are my feelings," said Lucy, as the carriage slowly moved up the long street to her Mother's. "It seems as though my life, for a few days past, was a wild dream of the imagination, and it seems as if I had waked up in a new world. It is so difficult," she continued, "to realize what I am."

"You have very clearly expressed my feelings," answered Mr. Holmes, "so far as I can go with you; but you have an experience in this matter to which I am a stranger."

"What do you mean, Mr. Holmes?" inquired Lucy.

"Let me ask, if you please, how your marriage with Mr. Leavit, was brought about, or how in the world it happened that you and he were engaged in so short a time after your first acquaintance," said Mr. Holmes, in his most bland and affectionate manner.

"Please don't ask any questions on that subject," replied Lucy, giving signs of great excitement of feeling, "I may give you the whole history at some future time, but not now."

Next morning, Mr. King, a married gentleman, and a warm friend of Lucy's, and withal a very careful and prudent man, called at the parsonage to inquire whether it might not be feared that Mr. Holmes would visit Mrs. Howard's, as before the marriage of Lucy with Mr. Leavit.

Mr. Mason thought it not at all probable, under the circumstances, but advised Mr. King to have an interview with Lucy as soon as possible, and give her some kind advice.

"If you think her mind will bear it," said Mr. Mason, "lay before her the fact, that she is a married lady, and that if she should, in a moment of thoughtlessness, enter into marriage with Holmes, she will not only subject herself to evil, and scandal, but to punishment by the law of our country."

"What a strange case it is," said Mr. King, with a deep sigh; "it is unlike anything I ever heard of."

"Deep, deep must be the sorrow, and shame of Lucy's whole life, if she is not brought to a premature grave," replied the minister.

Mr. King found Lucy in her room, bathed in tears, and almost frantic, begging him to send for Mr. Leavit.

"I am destroyed," said she, "and nothing will save me but the restoration of Mr. Leavit to his proper place. Oh, I have acted so madly! Why did I do so? Why didn't you, or some one of my friends advise me better?"

"Your friends," said Mr. King, "had no opportunity, for your marriage was somewhat private, and

was supposed to be perfectly agreeable; and then your separation from Mr. Leavit was effected so quickly that but few knew anything of it until it was accomplished; beside all that, you are of age, and it is a very delicate matter to meddle with such affairs."

Lucy became quiet preparatory, only, to the deeper agony that would soon lay hold of her heart. A few hours before the boat left for New Orleans, Mr. Leavit called to request Mr. Mason to take charge of his marriage certificate, and his papers of separation.

"I fear for the consequences of this course," said Mr. Mason, "I fear it will end in great disaster."

"It is not my fault, as you very well know," said Mr. Leavit, "and I intend to conduct myself in the most prudent manner possible, until the proper time expires for a divorce, or, it may be until our obligations are severed by death. I mean obligations of law and religion, for there are no obligations of affection resting on me. I feel clear in this whole affair, before both God and man. I once loved Lucy with perfect devotion, but not so now, and I cannot help it. I feel sorry for her condition, and sorry for Holmes, and regret as deeply as a man can, the whole affair; but it must be left to be adjusted by time, and the operations of Providence."

In six weeks from this time, Mr. Leavit was heard from, in New Orleans, where he was making preparations for a tour to Europe, and the East.

Mrs. Howard's residence was no longer the cheerful mansion of gay resort for the young. The piano was

closed, the guitar laid aside, and the voice of merry music was hushed, while evening but increased and darkened the gloomy drapery that hung around the soul of Lucy Howard. Clamorous tongues were hushed into silence, and none were encouraged in visiting Mrs. Howard's but Mr. King and his lady, with Mr. Mason and his lady. These select friends were as cheerful as the nature of the circumstances would admit, never referring to the sad affair which had so completely destroyed the happiness of the unfortunate Lucy.

"Will you take this letter to the post-office?" asked Lucy of Mr. King, as he was about leaving, one evening, after having succeeded in making her appear quite cheerful.

"Most willingly, Miss Lucy."

"Shall I read it to you?" said Lucy, as she opened a small sheet of note paper. "It is this," as she tremblingly commenced to read:

"DEAR HOLMES:—I am the destroyer of my own happiness, and the cause of my own exile from the society of friends I always loved. Mr. L. is not to blame; it is you and myself—myself the most. Circumstances, as well as a change in my feelings, compel me to request you to think of me as married to another, though now a stranger to woman's best hopes—alone and desolate. I ask no reply to this, nor do I ask to see you. Indeed the sight of you would but increase my sorrow, already more than I can endure."

"May 20.

LUCY."

Mr. and Mrs. King invited Lucy to accompany them on a visit to their friends in New Jersey, but this she promptly refused, giving as her reason, the

extreme feebleness of her health, and her utter incapacity to enjoy the journey, or endure the excitement of meeting with strangers. This latter reason was to Mr. King the most weighty, for he knew, although Lucy had been accustomed to company all her life, how strong was her aversion to go among strangers, and how retiring was her natural disposition. "And then you know, Mr. King," added Lucy, "how much has been said about me in the papers—I cannot leave home—I must not—though I thank you most heartily for your kind invitation. I know you mean it for my good."

"Yes, Lucy, it is for your good, and because Mrs. King desires you to go with us for the pleasure of your company."

"I could be of but little service in that respect," said Lucy, "for I am better fitted now for the silence of the grave."

"We all know," said Mr. King, "that it is better to die than live, if it be Heaven's will, and we are fully prepared for that great change."

"I wish you and Mrs. King," said Lucy, "to call and see me before you leave, for I think I shall never see you again, in this world."

"Nonsense," said Mr. King, "you are suffering yourself to be entirely too desponding."

"Not so, Mr. King, I am calm and perfectly in my right mind, though gloomy enough. But I have a presentiment that I shall soon die, and if so, I hope to meet my fate as a believer. My misfortunes, I hope,

will be sanctified to my good, and it may be that all this has come upon me to humble my proud heart."

At Lucy's request, Mr. Mason called to administer to her the consolations of religion; and during the interview, which was calm and rational, she referred to her first interview with Mr. Leavit. "You should know all about this, Mr. Mason," she continued, "for if I remember rightly, Mr. Leavit told me that he had promised you this information at some future time."

"He did," said Mr. Mason.

"You remember," said she, "when I was East, last fall, with sister and brother-in-law?"

"Right well," was the reply.

"On our way from Philadelphia to New York, on the steamer—was where I first saw Mr. Leavit. Our love was mutual from the moment we saw each other. He then told me of his intended tour to Europe, and requested me to accompany him, if not otherwise engaged. He wished me to reply to his proposition when we arrived in New York, at the same time handing me a few references, which he hoped would be satisfactory.

"The gentlemen to whom he referred were intimate friends of brother-in-law, and such was their report of him, that I could not for a moment doubt his quality and standing. After I returned home," she continued, "I received letters from him referring to families of undoubted reputation in my native city. Mr. Leavit is a gentleman of high feeling, and has done nothing but what any gentleman would do, under the circum-

stances. I ought to have told him of Mr. Holmes, or else communicated to Holmes all the facts; then, I believe, all would have been just right. But alas! alas! for me, it's now too late."

"I thank you for this information," said the minister, "and while I see, as I think, the whole case, I am persuaded that all your misfortunes were occasioned by too great haste; no doubt, you have been very greatly unfortunate, but have not greatly sinned. Yours is that kind of offense that is punished in this life."

In seven months from the time that the St. Charles was so brilliantly lighted, and its ladies' parlor received the wedding guests of Miss Lucy Howard and Mr. Leavit, the following notice appeared in one of the morning papers.

"Died on yesterday morning, at the residence of her mother on Eighth street, Miss Lucy Howard, in the twenty-second year of her age. Funeral at three o'clock this afternoon. Friends are invited to attend."

This occasioned as much excitement as the notice of Lucy's marriage; but it was an excitement of quite another character—then it was joy, but now it is sadness and weeping—then there were visits to the house of joy, but now there are visits to the house of weeping and mourning.

After the funeral, the following paper was found in Lucy's portfolio:

"Dearest mother: I think I shall soon die, and be no more among the living. I hope it may be so. I want you to bury me beside father, and plant a small weeping willow at the foot of my grave,

and on the plain marble slab at the head put nothing but **LUOR**. And, mother, don't weep for me. I fear not death's shadows—they will be lighted for me by the lamp of the Lord. I shall die in full hope of a happy resurrection, and of living forever with the pure and the holy. I say again, weep not for me, mother.

“**LUOR.**”

This was, no doubt, intended to be given to Mrs. Howard before Lucy's death; but it was laid aside, or forgotten, and the place she desired for her last house was selected, though her friends were unconscious of what had been her wish.

Lucy Howard now sleeps in —— Cemetery, beside the grave of her father; the weeping willow bending over the foot of her grave, and shedding its long branches over the white marble slab, seems to mourn over the lonely name of **LUOR**.

CHAPTER XII.

New appointment—Sickness—Kindness of three Men—The Presents
— The Local Preacher—The Union Prayer-Meeting — Sick man a
subject of Prayer—His Death—Death of his Son—Of his wife.

A PETITION, with the names of most of the members of the church, asking for the return of Mr. Mason to the city, was sent to the Bishop. But after careful thought, Mr. Mason concluded that it would be best to ask for a removal to some easier field of labor, where his expenses would not be so heavy. He had but little hope that his request would be granted, in view of the entire absence of any right that a Methodist preacher has to choose his own place, and of the absolute power of the Bishop and the Elders to send a minister wherever they please.

But contrary to expectation, Mr. Mason was appointed to —— station. On his return from Conference, he was taken very sick, and fears were generally entertained that he would not recover. In the course of a few weeks, however, he was well enough to start for his new charge. As he was very feeble, and could not endure the fatigue of staging, it was concluded to travel by canal as far as could be done in the direction of the new home. This proved a very tedious and unpleasant way of traveling. The boat was old and musty, and the weather extremely warm. After three days' travel, in this most unpleasant way, the boat

arrived at ——, some twenty miles from the new home. This was Saturday morning. Mr. Mason and family left the boat and proceeded to the hotel, leaving directions for their goods to be left at a certain warehouse. They had left the boat but a short time before the captain called to say that he must increase the bill some five dollars, because the boat had been longer on the way than was intended when the contract was made.

Mr. Mason objected to this, and referred to the captain's receipt. The captain, one of those very low, vulgar men, began to swear, and threaten to detain the goods until the extra amount was paid.

Mr. Mason told him to do so, and he would sue him for refusing such comforts and accommodations, on the boat, as had been agreed upon. The victuals were insufferably bad, and so were the beds, all of which could be shown to be a violation of the written agreement.

The captain left, and quietly unloaded the goods, in good order, saying nothing more about extra pay.

After this was all over, the proprietor of the hotel handed Mr. Mason the following letter:

"REV. MR. MASON — Dear Sir — You will please call at J. S. H.'s Livery Stable, where you will find a carriage and pair of horses and coachman, to bring yourself and family to ——. The bill is paid, and you will call at my house, where you will find a home until you are ready to go to house-keeping. Yours truly,

"C. L. D——."

"Now," said Mrs. Mason, "we may hope for good times, if even a few of the members of the church be as noble-hearted as the author of this letter."

"Don't be too much elated by this letter," said Mr. Mason. "It may be the work of some designing man, just like Bro. M. of —, who offered me a present of a new cloak, if I would counsel confidentially with him, and never appoint any class-leader but such as he would nominate."

"Now Mr. Mason," responded his wife, "you are always looking on the dark side of things; you may never meet with such another evil man in all your life as Mr. M. You found him truly a very corruptible creature; but just try to forget him, and look for the best."

"I would most cheerfully do so, if I could," said Mr. Mason; "but I have been so badly treated, and by so many, that I have lost confidence in nearly all mankind, and especially those who appear so zealous in their religious matters, and are so wonderfully anxious to be friendly with the minister, at first. I tell you, Madam, they are to be avoided."

"But this may be an exception," said Mrs. Mason, "and let us not make up our minds until we test the case."

"True," said Mr. Mason, "and I am willing to do just as you say in this matter. So we will drop it for the present, and hope for the best."

After some refreshments, which were indeed very agreeable, after the hard fare on the boat, the carriage was brought out, and the minister and his family started for —, with the determination to stop at Bro. C. L. D.'s, as requested by letter.

The ride was very pleasant, over a very good road, and through a most beautiful section of the country.

In due time they arrived at the very beautiful town of —, and, after a little inquiry, were soon at the splendid mansion of Bro. C. L. D. The carriage had scarcely stopped ere Brother C. L. D. and his whole family were out, with smiling faces, to receive their new minister.

"We are very glad to see you all here so safely," said Brother C. L. D., "and hope to make you comfortable and easy while you are with us. I am not," said he, "a very good member of the church, but while others who are better than I am, attend to the spiritual affairs of the Church, it seems to fall to me to keep up the money matters. We always pay our ministers, and I, for one, regret that their salary is not four times as large as it is."

"This is to be desired," said Mr. Mason, "but by strict economy we can make out to get through each year, if we have no sickness, and receive all that is promised us."

"Yes," said C. L. D., "but the trouble is, you get promises, and promises, and promises, yet at last, but a small share of what is promised."

"Very true," said Mr. Mason, "but we have to put up with it, and struggle on the best way we can. And this might be endured in some sort, if there was not joined to it so much trouble with the restless and turbulent spirit of our people."

"That is true," replied C. L. D., "and I am no little surprised that it is so. I have known persons refuse to pay anything until, as they said, they would see how they would like the preacher, and before the end of the year, be sure to get up a fuss with him, as I believe, for no other purpose than to get clear of paying anything for his support."

"I have known just such cases," said Mr. Mason, "and their morality, to say nothing of their religion, is very much exposed to suspicion."

This Brother C. L. D. and two others of similar heart, head and disposition, proved themselves, for two full years, the time Mr. Mason remained with them, as they had always been, and as they are still, if they are living, men of just the right stripe. Fast friends of the minister, the church, honesty, and integrity. When it was their duty, they acted with intelligence and calmness, and never suffered themselves to be the bearers of evil news; but on the other hand, of that which was good, and cheering, and comforting. The year passed on pleasantly until New Year's morning; nor did its pleasantness end there, it seemed only to begin.

Soon after breakfast, a boy was found at the parsonage door with a large bundle in his hand; it was received and opened, and found to be an entire suit of new clothes for Mr. Mason, sent to him by the young men of the village. It was a very elegant New Year's gift, and just in good time; for all that was sent was needed.

But this was not all; an hour or so after this, a little girl arrived with a bundle. What could this mean? Mrs. Mason at once suggested that this was a present for her. And when it was opened, sure enough, it was a dress, etc., etc. one of the very best that the ladies could find.

As the opening process was continued, the following note came to view.

"Dr. S. and Lady, will be happy to have Mr. Mason and lady dine with them at 1 o'clock."

"New Year's Morning. 18—."

Quite a number of persons were at Dr. S.'s to dinner; and not a few delighted to see Mr. Mason so well dressed. One young lady said to him, "You shall marry me in that new suit before it is soiled."

"Thank you," said Mr. Mason, "I shall be happy to do so." Sure enough, on the following Thursday evening, Mr. Mason was called upon to marry this young lady to one of his most intimate friends, from ———. It was a joyful time, although Mr. Mason knew nothing of the intended marriage until he was called upon to perform the service.

During the course of the year, a local preacher, happily the only one belonging to that congregation, began, as was usual with him, and, unfortunately, with most of the same order, wherever they are found, to find fault with Mr. Mason's course. He objected to the choir, to the promiscuous seating of the congregation, to the monthly communion, and to the few notes that Mr. Mason usually laid in the Bible when

he preached. He carried this opposition to such a length, that he often indulged in slander, and, sometimes, in falsehood. It was thought best, after frequent admonitions, to bring him before the quarterly Conference. When the charges were presented to him he became very much enraged, and used some very profane language. The charges, in their first form, were withdrawn, and renewed, with the additional charge of profane swearing. This seemed to humble the man somewhat, and he agreed to meet the charges like a man.

The time for holding the Conference arrived, and the trial was entered upon in due form. Every specification was sustained, and, of course, all the charges. He was expelled, and his family withdrew from the church, in quite a rage, to be sure.

It was not long after this, before the fact that he abused his family, known before to but few, and to none but church members, became public; and such was the indignation of the citizens, that this ex-local preacher was compelled to leave the place.

At the beginning of the second year, the Presbyterian minister, much of a gentleman, a scholar and a Christian, proposed to unite the prayer meetings of the two churches, and to hold them alternately at the two churches. Mr. Mason named this to his official members, and, after some consultation, it was agreed to. The first evening of this union, the meeting was held in the Methodist church. There was quite a turn out indeed; the meeting was quite spirited, and gave good reason to hope that it would do well.

The next night it was to be held in the Presbyterian church, but when the time arrived to commence the meeting, not a Methodist was present except Mr. Mason. This chilled the hearts of those present, and the meeting passed off rather heavily. The next morning it was found that a few of the very zealous Methodists, and those, too, who scarcely ever attended prayer meeting in any place, had assembled at a private house, and sung, prayed, and vociferated until near midnight. Of course, they were in good trim for a regular fuss about "breaking up the prayer meeting," and about "turning Presbyterian," and about having their "liberty taken away," and a dozen other subjects which need not be named.

The excitement ran very high for about a week, and then died away. This course of the over-zealous, very much mortified the better class of the church members, who determined *now* to sustain the union prayer meeting, at least through the summer.

On the evening of prayer meeting at the Presbyterian church, Mr. Mason had just returned from visiting a very sick man, in time to commence the meeting. He made known the case of this man to the minister, who immediately rose and made a statement of the case, and proposed, as the sick man was not a member of any Christian Church, to make him a subject of especial prayer. He here took occasion to make some very powerful remarks on the efficacy of prayer; those present seemed greatly moved, and prayed with great fervor for the conversion of the dying man.

After the meeting closed, the two ministers visited the sick man, and found him greatly concerned for his present and future peace. Prayer was continued in his behalf, with such instruction as seemed to be necessary. In about an hour he rejoiced, and reported himself as at peace with his Creator, and willing to die. In two hours after this he was in eternity. All were deeply impressed with this signal and speedy answer to prayer.

That night his son was taken ill, and in two days, was a corpse. The night of his death, his mother was taken sick, and in two days she died. In less than a week three members of one family, healthy and robust, were hurried into futurity. The citizens seemed humbled, as if they believed God's just judgments were about to fall upon them.

The next Sabbath, Mr. Mason, and the Presbyterian minister, both preached the funeral sermons of these three persons. The result was a time of seriousness and awakening in both Churches.

It was thought that this might be a reason why the Churches should be more united, and work together for the common good. But it was found that a few were so dissatisfied, that it was thought best to discontinue the union meeting, and return to the usual course. This was done, but it did not have the effect of bringing the complainers to meet any oftener than before the union prayer meeting was commenced. How inconsistent some people are! Bigotry, thou art an enemy!

CHAPTER XIII.

Conversation about Mr. Wesley and Church Government — Defects in Methodist Polity.

"Good morning, Mr. Mason," said Mr. D., as he threw his old hat upon the floor and took his seat by the window. "I have been thinking for some time of having a chat with you on matters and things about Churches. I am no church member, as you know, but I like to think, read and talk about Churches. And if you are not engaged, and as it is a wet day, I will spend a little time with you."

"All right," said Mr. Mason, "make yourself perfectly easy, and take your own time, and choose your own subject. I am not extensively read, but I love to read, and learn all I can in conversation."

"I want to learn from you," said Mr. D.

"We may be mutually instructed," said Mr. Mason.

"That is true," said Mr. D.

"I have been reading," said he, "two or three lives of John Wesley, one by Dr. Whitehead, one by Mr. Southey, and one by Mr. Watson, and some others, and I am at a loss to know why they do not agree. Can you tell me?"

"I may not be able to harmonize these lives," said Mr. Mason, "but will just say, that Whitehead and Southey have written more extensively than the

others, and have, therefore, named more subjects than the others."

"That is true," said Mr. D., "but in the smaller works some very important things are omitted."

"Such only," said Mr. Mason, "as are not necessary to show Mr. Wesley's real character, I suppose."

"Yes," said Mr. D., "but his real character ought to be known, in order to know the man, and unless Dr. Whitehead wrote what was not true, Wesley's real character is there presented."

"It should be," said Mr. Mason, "for Dr. Whitehead was authorized by Mr. Wesley himself, to take charge of all his papers, and was regularly appointed to write his life."

"Something is wrong here," said Mr. D., "for the Methodist publishing houses do not publish Whitehead's Life of Wesley, and why is it?"

"It is too costly," said Mr. Mason, "for the great mass of our people, and the others are just as good, and much cheaper."

"Not so good," said Mr. D.

"Why not?" said Mr. Mason.

"Because they do not tell the whole truth," said Mr. D.

"They tell enough," said Mr. Mason, "to inform our people who Mr. Wesley is."

"Not quite," said Mr. D. "They give his good qualities, but not his bad ones."

"I hope you don't suppose Mr. Wesley was a bad man?" said Mr. Mason.

"Not very good," said Mr. D. "He was certainly a very ambitious man, and a great tyrant."

"Ambitious of good?" said Mr. Mason.

"Not quite," said Mr. D., but ambitious of power."

"It can't be so," said Mr. Mason.

"But he was," said Mr. D., "and Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Southey, both make him out so; and this is one of the reasons why their books are not popular with your people."

"You are our enemy," said Mr. Mason.

"I am not," said Mr. D., "but I am a friend to truth and justice, and love to see every man have his rights."

"In that you are right," said Mr. Mason, "but you are prejudiced against Mr. Wesley."

"Not in the least," said Mr. D., "if I view him in his proper character. But one thing I dislike, and that is, to hear him referred to in the pulpit, as authority, when the Bible would be much more agreeable, and, I think, much more convincing."

"I dislike this too," said Mr. Mason; "but our preachers will do it."

"Now, Mr. Mason, to prove to you the truth of what I have said, let me give you a piece of history," said Mr. D.

"Agreed," said Mr. Mason. "What is it?"

"You know," said Mr. D., "that there lived in Mr. Wesley's day, one Augustus Toplady, who was a strict Calvinist, and opposed to all forms of church government that oppressed the people. This Toplady, you

are aware, had a controversy with Mr. Wesley, on the subject of doctrines; and several small books were printed upon the subject, such as "Toplady on Predestination," the "Doctrinal Tracts," etc.

"I am aware of this," said Mr. Mason.

"Well," said Mr. D., "this Toplady brings out this fact, and I will show by naming it, how it proves, with Wesley's whole course, that he was naturally a tyrant, and only wanted power to carry his despotic spirit into practice."

"You take very strong ground, Mr. D., and, I fear, very dangerous ground," said Mr. Mason.

"How dangerous?" said Mr. D.

"Why, injurious to Mr. Wesley," said Mr. Mason.

"I do not consider Mr. Wesley as sacred as your people do. He had great and glaring faults of character, and they ought to be exposed," said Mr. D.

"Excuse me," said Mr. Mason, "for interrupting you. Please return to your subject."

"Well, it may surprise you somewhat, to learn that Mr. Wesley applied to a bishop of the Greek Church, then traveling in England, calling himself 'Erasmus, Bishop of Arcadia,' and requested him to 'ordain several of his lay preachers according to the manner of the Greek Church. And again, these lay preachers, thus ordained, dressed and officiated as clergymen of the Church of England. And, to make the thing still more impressive, Mr. Wesley declared their ordination as valid as his own, which he had received at Oxford. And, moreover, Mr. Wesley pressed this

Greek bishop to ordain him a bishop at large, that he might ordain as many ministers as he pleased, and thus keep up the Apostolic succession among his converts, through the medium of the Greek Church. This would have been done, and Mr. Wesley would have been a sort of universal bishop, but for the fact that this Greek bishop refused, on the ground that the canons of the Greek Church required more than one bishop to be present at the ordination of a bishop. These facts are brought out by a letter from Toplady to Wesley."

"I never heard of this before," said Mr. Mason, "and there must be some mistake in it. I say this, not to contradict you, Mr. D., but because if such a thing did take place, Wesley's enemies, and especially that clear-headed, sharp-sighted, Alexander McKean, would long ago have found it out."

"This Greek bishop, no doubt," said Mr. D., "kept the thing somewhat private, inasmuch as the whole business was of a very delicate nature; and it may be, that he told Toplady, and a few others, not of the Wesleyan Church. But of the truth of the thing, I have no doubt, looking at the character and standing of Toplady. And I have no doubt that some of Wesley's friends, in England, knew it; but out of respect for him, and because the thing itself was so perfectly absurd, suppressed it."

"If this be true," said Mr. Mason, "my confidence in Mr. Wesley is gone. I had supposed him far above such a thing as this."

"The thing is the more absurd," said Mr. D., "when we look at the fact that the Greek Church is just as corrupt as the Romish Church."

"That is true," said Mr. Mason.

"Now," said Mr. D., "you know that Wesley always approved of the Episcopal form of government, believing it to be primitive and apostolic; and you know, too, that such was the great irregularity of his course, that he could not be ordained a bishop in the Church of England; and desiring power, as he did, he would even sacrifice principle by asking for ordination at the hand of a man but little better than a heathen, and of a Church as corrupt as heathenism and error can make it."

"But," said Mr. Mason, "Mr. Wesley, after reading Lord King's book, said, he saw that he had as good a right to ordain preachers as any man in England."

"Just so," said Mr. D., "but this was after he had failed in getting ordination from the Greek bishop."

"In view of his power," said Mr. Mason, "he did ordain Coke, and Asbury, for the good of the cause in America."

"But don't you know," said Mr. D., "that Coke was dissatisfied with this ordination, and applied to Bishop White of this country to be ordained in the regular way, and that Bishop White refused? And don't you know, also, that this same Coke went back to England and offered to go to any mission-field, if

the Bishop of London would only make a bishop of him?"

"I know this is said of Dr. Coke," said Mr. Mason, "but then we are not to magnify men's errors, and overlook their virtues."

"Not at all," said Mr. D., "but all this goes to show the leading spirit of these men, and that nothing could satisfy their ambition but position and power. And just so far as they could, they influenced the formation of the oppressive polity of the Methodist Church in this country."

"I am surprised, Mr. D., to hear you speak so of the government of our Church," said Mr. Mason; "we think it is the most perfect in the world, and the most like the Church in the days of the apostles. Just look at our itineracy, and see what wonders it is doing."

"Just so," said Mr. D., "you ascribe your success to your *system*, and not to the Gospel. You shout over Methodism as if it were Christianity."

"Well, you know, that Dr. Chalmers said, 'Methodism is Christianity in earnest;' and I believe it," said Mr. Mason.

"That will do to shout over, but it will not send men to heaven; and I know, and so do you, that Methodism is destined to a short life, in its present form. But that the world is large, and affords room for new efforts, it would die in less than half a century."

"Why so?" said Mr. Mason.

"Because it has not the power or stability to maintain its influence in any one place, more than ten years at a time," said Mr. D. "It is attended with such excitement, and gives so little instruction, that the people become exhausted, and either get to fighting among themselves, or sink into such a state of indifference, that they leave the whole thing in disgust. Look at your class meetings, in some of your large churches! Eight or ten of them meet in as many rooms, in the basements of your churches, on Sunday morning, before preaching, and sing and vociferate so that the whole square is disturbed, and so that the class in each room is so annoyed with the noise of the others, that religious meditation is impossible. The members of these classes then go into the church, to *hear preaching!* in such a state of prostration, from the excitement in the class rooms, that before the sermon is fairly commenced, many of them are asleep."

"Now you know, Mr. Mason, that this is injurious. The class meeting is raised above the Sacrament, and stands before preaching; and all else is looked upon as nothing, compared with this."

"I love class meetings," said Mr. Mason.

"Yes, that is what all your people say," said Mr. D; "they shout more over this than over the Gospel."

"I think not," said Mr. Mason.

"But it is true," said Mr. D. "More is said about it in your pulpits, and in your newspapers, than is

said of the Lord's Supper, or Baptism, or anything else ordained of God."

"You talk very plainly," said Mr. Mason.

"But I do not intend to hurt your feelings, Mr. Mason; far be it from me," said Mr. D.

"I do not suppose you do; but you must know that such thrusts at our glorious old Methodism, must hurt any one who loves such a God-inspired plan as it is," said Mr. Mason.

"Pardon me," said Mr. D., "I intend no harm; I only took it for granted, that we Americans had a right to examine into the nature and tendencies of all the institutions among us. I love your people as well as I do any other Christians; my wife, you know, is a member of your Church, and I always feel it my duty to support your preachers, though I must be permitted, as a thinking man, to examine for myself, and to conclude that, with the good in your Church, there is a vast amount of despotism, and human invention, and human rubbish."

"Did you ever read our Discipline?" said Mr. Mason.

"Often," said Mr. D.

"Is it not a complete system of law?" said Mr. Mason.

"Complete of the kind," said Mr. D., "but its principles are wrong."

"In what respect?" said Mr. Mason.

"Episcopacy never had any sanction in the Bible, nor by the primitive Church; and the lay members

have no rights," said Mr. D. "And the kind of episcopacy which that book recognizes, is a burlesque upon the very name. You contend for but two orders in the ministry, and yet you have three ordinations."

Here a gentleman rode up to the door, and called for Mr. D. on business, and that ended the conversation. Mrs. Mason came in, and said, "You have had quite a conversation with Mr. D.; and how do you like him?"

"Very well," said Mr. Mason, "he made me think more about our church polity than I ever did before. I am afraid there are some things about it that are very rotten and corrupt. It will not bear the test of reason, history, and the Bible. I feel very badly about it."

"Never mind," said Mrs. Mason, "we will not be injured by it if we try to be good Christians."

CHAPTER XIV.

Treatment of Reformers—Class-Meeting a Test of Church-Membership—Evil Influences of.

MR. MASON and Mr. D. happened to meet, one day, in the tailor shop of Mr. F., where they resumed the conversation, so abruptly broken off, some days before. And as this was a place of but little resort, and as Mr. F. was a very intelligent and prudent man, they concluded to talk as freely as if alone.

"Now, Mr. Mason," said Mr. D. "when we last talked, I named the fact, that Methodist church polity is despotic and oppressive. To prove this, I will refer you to the treatment of the Reformers, or Radicals, as they were then called, of 1827, etc. Because a few ministers and laymen dared to speak and write about the necessity of reform in some things, especially the Presiding Eldership, and Lay representation, what was the consequence? simply this, they were persecuted and pursued with all the zeal and evil feeling that malice could invent, and finally driven out of the Church. I know one man, of the finest order of talent, who was tried by the Conference and expelled, and during the pendency of his appeal to the General Conference, was compelled to peddle books to support his family! and for what? simply for exercising his right as an American freeman, in discussing the polity of the Church."

"He was not alone in this suffering. Hundreds of the very flower of the Church, both East and West, were treated in a similarly harsh manner. Despotism, in the dark ages, was not more severe and relentless. I can think of no period to be compared to those days—of no men, but the period when heretics were burned to death, and the men who could coolly pronounce this condemnation. The result was the building up of the Methodist Protestant Church, with a government much more in harmony with the government of our country than that of your Church."

"But, Mr. D.," said Mr. Mason, "you know, that we have a rule that forbids saying anything against our doctrines or discipline, and the Reformers knew this rule, and had promised to keep the rules of the Church, both when they united with the Church, and when the preachers were ordained; and don't you think it was right to expel them for violating their vows?"

"No, sir," said Mr. D., "they were under no moral obligation to keep rules that they afterward found to be unreasonable and oppressive. They showed how enlightened their consciences were by resisting these tyrannical laws. Look at Paul's enemies. They swore they would 'neither eat nor drink, till they had killed Paul.' But they found they could not do this, and that their oath was rash and wicked, and it was, therefore, right to violate it, rather than destroy themselves."

"That is true," said Mr. Mason; "but you do not suppose Methodists act rashly, when they promise to keep the rules of the Church?"

"They are bound to keep no rule," said Mr. D., "as a rule of conscience, that is not sustained by the Bible, and which clearly takes away their rights as freemen, while it adds nothing to their real religious enjoyment and improvement in morals."

"But we can prove our rules by the Scripture," said Mr. Mason.

"Try the rule that makes class meeting a test of membership, if you please," said Mr. D.

"Oh!" said Mr. Mason, "we don't expect to find our rules in the very words of the Bible, but in the general principles laid down."

"Name a passage that contains the principle, if you please," said Mr. D.

"Well, I can't just think of one now, but I know there are passages that refer to such meetings, as where it says, 'They that feared the Lord speak often,' etc.

"I hope you don't quote that to support the principle, or even the practice of class meeting," said Mr. D.

"That passage is often used for that purpose," said Mr. Mason.

"But," said Mr. D., "I saw a little book, published by one of your own preachers, in which the author says, no claim can be set up for Scripture authority for any such meeting. Now it appears,

from this, that you are not agreed among yourselves."

"I know," said Mr. Mason, "there is some difference of opinion among us."

"Let me read to you," said Mr. D., "an extract from the London Watchman, a Methodist paper, I think, on the subject of class meeting; it is but little short of downright and open blasphemy. Here it is. 'The discipline of Methodism is not to be relaxed in order to admit multitudes of unconverted people, at the expense of purity. There can be no substitute for class meetings; nor, in our Church, can there be any other test of membership, than the class meeting; for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a duty and a privilege, but not a test.' What do you think of that, Mr. Mason? Don't it set aside the institution of God for one of man's device; and that too, as you know, for the mere purpose of raising money to get bankrupt churches out of debt?"

"Why I never heard such doctrine as that advanced before!" said Mr. Mason.

"I suppose not," said Mr. D., "but that shows how far the error may be carried, allowing the propagator to become blind to the truth, as most errorists are."

"I am surprised at that editor," said Mr. Mason, "but, surely, he is not sustained by the British Conference."

"He surely was," said Mr. D., "and you have just uttered the same thing, though in a different way."

"How?" said Mr. Mason.

"By claiming for it Scripture origin," said Mr. D. "And if you will look for a moment, you will give it up. If it has support in the Bible as a duty and test of church membership, then it comes in conflict with the Lord's Supper, and other tests of membership in the Church, and makes the Bible contradict itself. And this is not all; the doctrine of that extract is carried out all through your Church, and hence it is that the people now think and talk more about class meeting, than they do about Baptism, the Sacrament, or preaching. And thus it is that the people are led, not only to forget that religion must be rational and founded on the Scriptures, but to shout, in their wild enthusiasm, over the commandments of men."

"You seem to think very little of our Church and people," said Mr. Mason.

"Much more," said Mr. D., "than you think I do, but I cannot be blind to these false and dangerous rules. And let me say, just here, that unless your polity is changed you must ultimately fail. Other churches are following you, and building up permanent and thriving congregations, where you are going down, and just because you have that very unnatural and oppressive system of changing your ministers, and because your people feel so much of oppression that they are unwilling to pay a man anything like a decent support. You ought to have twice as much as you will get. And I

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might name here another evil that grows out of the system—a badly-educated conscience and sense of justice. Your people will promise to pay you so much, but at the end of the year, in nine cases out of ten, they will fail by one-third or one-fourth, and, sometimes, by one half.”

“I will see you again,” said Mr. Mason, “for I have become interested in these things, and am sorry that my engagements will not permit me to remain longer.”

CHAPTER XV.

Bigotry among Methodists—Lining out Hymns—Separation of Men and Women in the Congregation—Evil influence of.

ON Sabbath morning, after service, a fine-looking gentleman, Mr. L. from Rhode Island, who had lived in — for the past year, very politely approached Mr. Mason, and asked for an interview with him on Monday morning, if convenient.

"Certainly," said Mr. Mason, "come to the parsonage at any time in the forenoon, and I will be glad to see you."

"Can't you come to my office?" said Mr. L.

"I can," said Mr. Mason, "but we can be much more retired at my house," supposing, of course, that Mr. L. wished to converse with him about uniting with the Church, together with his family, they having attended that church from the time they came to the place.

"Yes," said Mr. L., "I will come to your house at ten o'clock."

Mr. Mason felt much delighted with the prospect of Bro. L. and his family uniting with the Church, and observed to Mrs. Mason, that he would make such a good steward—he is a man of liberal views, and always so gentlemanly with the ministers.

But how changed were his feelings on Monday, after Mr. L. left! He felt that there must be some-

thing very repulsive, to refined persons, about the workings of Methodism. His heart was sick.

Mr. L. came at the appointed time, and said that he had just one hour to stay, as some unexpected business would engage him at his office at eleven o'clock.

He remarked to Mr. Mason, that he had felt an interest in him from the first time he saw him, and felt a desire to converse with him about some things in the church, that were not only out of taste, but useless and injurious.

"There," said he, "was the Union Bible meeting, and there were not ten of all your members present. I asked some of them, the next day, why they were not there, and they promptly told me they would support no Presbyterian society for any purpose. 'But,' said I, 'the American Bible Society is not a Presbyterian concern, by any means. It is composed of all evangelical denominations in the country, and your preachers are always identified with it in some way. There is Dr. F., who is financial secretary, and Mr. S. and Mr. M., who are agents.' 'But' said they, 'that's for show. They know how to work things, but we can see through them, and have determined to let them go, and mind our own business.'"

"I was sorry," said Mr. Mason, "that more were not present at that meeting; I gave it out, and urged the people to go. I was there, as you know, and was appointed to deliver an address next year, but

declined on account of not knowing where I might be sent to by the bishop and the Conference.

"I felt sorry for you," said Mr. L., "and could readily see why your ministers are not more generally identified with the local benevolent enterprises of the day, and why it is that they are scarcely ever regarded as citizens of any one place."

"We feel this," said Mr. Mason.

"Can't it be changed?" asked Mr. L.

"It might," said Mr. Mason, "if we could get the right sort of men to the General Conference."

"Why don't you send such men?" said Mr. L.

"Simply because our presiding elders generally expect to go, and, as might be expected, there are always enough of men to sustain them in order to get favors. And, beside this, our old men seem to think the itineracy is from above, and cannot be changed, and many of our young men, in their zeal, shout a great deal over what they call Old-fashioned Methodism, and, with the old men, they have the majority."

"There are other things," said Mr. L., "that might be changed. There is the lining out of the hymn. That, to me, is perfectly ridiculous, in an old place like this. I would not object if the people could not read, or if they were not able to buy hymn-books. The practice drives away all the hymn-books, for the people have no use for them, and then it is impossible to make good music."

"I know all this is true," said Mr. Mason, "and regret that it is so, but it is our custom."

"I believe your people generally oppose good singing," said Mr. L.

"Choir singing they do," said Mr. Mason.

"You can't get good singing," said Mr. L., "without a choir."

"We could," said Mr. Mason, "if our people would pay any attention to the principles of music."

"I like congregational singing," said Mr. L., "if we could have it; but it is evident we cannot, and I am therefore, in favor of a choir in every congregation, rather than that screeching, dragging style that is too common in this country."

"You were raised at the East, I believe," said Mr. Mason.

"Yes sir, in Rhode Island."

"That accounts for your preference for choir singing," said Mr. Mason.

"We have choirs all over the East, and so they have in the West, except in your church," said Mr. L.

"And the churches at the East are generally pewed, I understand," said Mr. Mason.

"Generally, and where the pews are not sold, or rented, the families sit together," said Mr. L.

"And how does it work?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Admirably," said Mr. L., "the congregation is so much more orderly, and the children can be taken better care of."

"I have often thought," said Mr. Mason, "that there would be no harm in families sitting together

in church, but then we have a rule against it, and the rule must be observed."

"Why so?" asked Mr. L.

"Because it is in the book," said Mr. Mason.

"It has neither reason, propriety, nor the Bible to support it, and is not therefore binding on any one," said Mr. L., "and the sooner it is out of use the better, for it is a decided injury to the comfort and convenience of families, and to the morals of the young. Just look," said he, "at the want of order in your church, and at the number of rowdies that go there, while there is order and the entire absence of these baser sort at every other church."

"That is true," said Mr. Mason, "but I doubt whether the separation of the males and females is the cause of this."

"It is, in part," said Mr. L., "and your free seats make the balance of the cause."

"It may be so," said Mr. Mason, "but more people go to our churches than to any other,"

"That is true," said Mr. L., "but what kind of people?"

"Very respectable," said Mr. Mason.

"Why is it then," asked Mr. L., "that the mayors of cities are so often asked to send policemen, to keep order at your churches?"

"Well," said Mr. Mason, "the excitement and noise bring the rabble, and they generally make disturbance."

"Just so," said Mr. L., "and that makes my words good."

Here Mr. L., looked at his watch and found his time had expired, and left.

Mrs. Mason came in to inquire what Mr. L. had to say.

"Oh," said Mr. Mason, "of course it was to find objections to our church. I am heartily tired of this, and such is the nature of the charges brought against us that I cannot defend the church."

"What has Mr. L. against the church," asked Mrs. Mason.

"Just what everybody else has," said Mr. Mason. "He objects to the lining out of the hymns, to our bigotry, to the men and women sitting apart, and to all that every other sensible man would object."

"I do hope," said Mrs. Mason, "that the people will let you alone. You can't help these useless rules, and it only injures your feelings and keeps you excited, to have persons always talking to you."

"I must endure it," said Mr. Mason, "but I believe these old-fashioned and senseless usages are very much against our prosperity."

CHAPTER XVI.

Visit to the Mountains—The Old Lady—The New House—The Courtship—The Blind Horse—The Marriage.

ON account of ill health, Mr. Mason was advised to spend the summer in some mountainous district. He selected the mountains at the head-waters of —— river, as the most convenient of access, and, at the same time, as affording the kind of air, water, and diet that were advised as the best.

On the day appointed to leave, the stage drove up to the parsonage door, and the minister and his wife got in and took the hind-seat, and off they went at full speed. It was a two-horse stage, and at most, would hold but four persons, there being but two seats in the inside. At two o'clock they stopped to dine at a small village in —— . There was nothing to drink on the table but milk, and neither Mr. nor Mrs. Mason could use this on account of a severe headache with which they were both suffering. Tea was called for, but the reply was, "We have none." Water was called for, and the old lady, waiting upon the table, muttered some ill-natured words, and brought in some water in two rusty tin-cups. It was a hard dose, but it was that or nothing.

After dinner Mr. Mason asked for some one to receive the money for the dinner. The old lady

very gruffly said, "No one here but me," and looking at Mr. Mason asked, if he was a preacher.

"What makes you ask?" said Mr. Mason.

"That *white* about your neck," said the old lady, with a very indistinct expression of the softness of female humanity.

"I am," said Mr. Mason.

"What sort?" was the eager inquiry.

"A very poor one," said Mr. Mason.

"I suppose so," said the old lady, "for you're a very poor man—you've nothin' but skin and bones—and you're so yaller." And looking still a little more like a woman, she said: "But you haven't told me what sort of preacher you are."

"I said, 'a very poor one,'" said Mr. Mason.

"I know that," said the old lady, "but that isn't what I mean."

"What do you mean then?" said Mr. Mason. Here Mrs. Mason spoke, not liking the manner of her husband in quizzing the old lady, and said, "She means what Church do you belong to."

"Oh, yes! yes!" said Mr. Mason, "is that what you mean?" looking at the old lady.

"Yes," said she.

"Well, madam," said Mr. Mason, with a very serious countenance, "I belong to the Church of Christ, I trust."

"What church is that?" asked the old lady, "it's some new church I never heard of."

"It's as old as the world," said Mr. Mason.

"It must be very small," said the old lady, "for I never heard of it in all my life."

"Not very," said Mr. Mason; "it embraces all the good people in the world."

"That can't be," said the old lady, "for I'm sure the Methodists are good people, and not one of them belongs to that church."

"I suppose they do," said Mr. Mason.

"No they don't," said the old lady.

"Don't belong to the Church of Christ!" said Mr. Mason, "why that's very singular. They must be very bad people indeed."

"No they ain't neither," said the old lady, looking as if her dander was getting up.

Mrs. Mason again spoke, and said she knew the Methodists were good people.

"And so do I," said the old lady.

"How can they be so," said Mr. Mason, "if they don't belong to Christ's Church?"

"I know they are good, anyway, for they are the only people that have class meetings," said the old lady.

"Do you think class meetings are good meetings?" said Mr. Mason.

"Yes I do—the best meetings in the world," said the old lady.

"Better than the Sacrament?" said Mr. Mason.

"I don't know anything about that meetin'," said the old lady.

"What! The Lord's Supper! You don't know anything about that!" said Mr. Mason, with an air of great surprise.

"Oh yes, now I know; but I don't like it as well as class," said the old lady.

"How often have you taken the Lord's Supper?" said Mr. Mason.

"Never but once," said the old lady, "and we have class every Sunday.

"Are you a Methodist?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Yes," said the old lady, "I've been a Methodist for near thirty years, and my father before me, was one too."

The stage-horn sounded, and Mr. Mason asked to pay his bill, but the old lady insisted on knowing what sort of a preacher he was.

Mrs. Mason said, "He is a Methodist preacher."

"Oh, then," said the old lady, softened down to the resemblance of a woman, "we don't charge preachers."

"Thank you," said Mr. Mason, and bidding her good-by, he and his wife took their seat in the stage.

Here they found a grave-looking man on the front seat, who, they supposed, was a minister of some kind. Mr. Mason ventured to speak to him about the roughness of the road and country. He answered in very few words, seeming to be indisposed to talk much.

Things looked very dreary, especially when the thought of riding all night came up. But it must

be endured, and was submitted to with as much patience as could be exercised on that occasion.

In the morning they were landed at a little country tavern, twelve miles from the place to which they were going. When they got out of the stage, and looked about them, they were perfectly bewildered with the mountains, high rocks, and deep ravines, and the roar of a water-fall.

The man who kept this little hotel was very pleasant and kind, and seemed to have seen better days in another place. His wife, too, was a rare specimen of kindness, health, and intelligence. These two persons reminded one of two sparkling gems in the midst of common rock, or of two angels in the wilderness; and their house, to Mr. and Mrs. Mason, weary and sick as they were, was like the Convent of St. Catharine near Mount Sinai, in Arabia, to the weary traveler in the desert.

Things were so comfortable that Mr. and Mrs. Mason concluded to stay there several days and rest, breathing the pure air, and becoming more familiar with the gorgeous scenery that everywhere met the eye in that mountain-region. And they were not alone in this purpose, for the next morning, when the stage arrived, a gentleman and lady got out in order to get breakfast. They were so delighted with the mountains, the host and hostess, that they determined to remain a week. In the course of the day the lady took her seat by Mrs. Mason, in the neat little parlor, and asked her if her name was not S. M. B.

"That was my name before I was married," said Mrs. Mason, "and my present name is Mason."

With this the lady threw her arms around Mrs. Mason's neck, and kissed her, and wept bitterly. Mrs. Mason was quite at a loss to understand this; but as soon as the lady recovered a little, the mystery was explained. The lady said:

"You and my sister roomed together at the Seminary in —, and she loved you most devotedly, and often wrote to us how kind and good you were. After she left the seminary she married and settled in —. Her husband was a merchant. In a few years after, you and your husband were sent there in charge of the church. Shortly after you came, my sister was taken sick, and found in you the same old and kind friend that you had been in the seminary. She died, and I was there and saw you, but was not introduced to you. The moment I saw you this morning, when we arrived, my heart was filled with the remembrance of my dear sister Laura."

Mr. Mason came in and found his wife and the strange lady weeping, and was quite at a loss to understand it. He knew, however, that it was not caused by any misunderstanding or difficulty. Soon after the strange gentleman came in and seemed as much at a loss to understand matters as Mr. Mason was. Mrs. Mason very soon relieved this suspense, by explaining to her husband, and by reminding him of the sickness and death of Mrs. —. This

incident, melancholy as it was, and attended with so much gloom for a time, gave place to sunshine and smiles, and happiness seemed to fill all the place. Rambling over the hills was proposed, but so feeble was Mr. Mason, that he could not engage in this. It was concluded to remain in, and near the house, and to employ their time, for a few days, in reading a very interesting history of the French Revolution; hoping that Mr. Mason would get strong enough to go with them to the mountains. In the meantime, they found that their host and hostess had lived for several years in Philadelphia, and that he had been engaged largely in the book trade, but had failed by the dishonesty of his two partners, and had lost his health also. To regain this was his object, in opening the little hotel in the mountains. So much were the visitors interested in these two persons, that they felt as if they were all one family.

"Do you make any money here?" Mr. Mason ventured to ask, as they were all sitting on the porch, and telling each other what they had seen and done.

"I make a good living, and save about two hundred dollars a year," said the landlord.

"I am glad of that," said Mr. Mason, "and hope you are a Christian, and that the sunshine of prosperity will continue to rise upon you."

"Thank you," said the landlord. "We pay but a small rent—sixty dollars a year—and we have about as much custom as we want, and very often many more than we can accommodate. Persons from a

distance come here and spend weeks, in the hot weather, and always pay the cash. And beside this, marketing, as fowls and vegetables, are very cheap. We raise a good many things ourselves."

"Do you expect to remain here long?" asked the other gentleman, Mr. F. we will call him.

"No longer," said the landlord, "than we get as much as will start me in business again. My health is now very good, and I long to be working with books. It is my business, and I like it very much. And then I was raised in a city, and prefer that kind of life to any other."

"How does your wife like living here among these mountains?" asked Mr. F.

"Oh," said the landlord, as he brushed a tear from his cheek, "my wife is one of the best of women. She will go any place with me, and cheerfully submit to whatever may be the circumstances about her. She is just as cheerful here as she was in the city, when I was doing my largest business."

"What a blessing!" said Mr. F.

"Are you a member of any church?" asked Mr. Mason.

"I, and my wife are Presbyterians," was the reply; "but we have but little preaching of any kind here; and that is one great reason why I wish to get away. When the Sabbath comes, I feel like being quiet, and going to church, but that is often a busy day, and then there is no church to go to, even if we could get away," was the full reply.

Things passed on happily for several days, when Mr. and Mrs. Mason determined to leave. The question then was, how to get to the desired place across the mountains, and over a very bad road.

Upon making inquiry of the kind landlord, it was found that he had two good horses and a strong carriage, just for the purpose of accommodating any that might wish to be taken to any point off the main road.

All things were ready for a start, and Mr. Mason called for his bill, expecting to pay, at least, two dollars a day for himself and wife. But the bill had been paid — Mr. F. had just been married, and was out enjoying a few weeks with his young bride, and told the landlord that it would add much to his enjoyment to pay Mr. Mason's bill. The parting was not without emotion, and promises of letters, and visits at any time that circumstances would permit. But they never met again. Mr. F. removed to the South, and Mr. Mason to the North, and have heard nothing from each other since. But two letters passed between the ladies.

About the middle of the day, after a journey of no little interest, Mr. and Mrs. Mason were safely landed at the place of destination. They had passed over some portions of the road that were far above the tops of the trees growing in the hollow, or ravine below, and Mrs. Mason was not without her fear that they might fall over and be killed. But the landlord, who understood the road, and was, withal, a good driver, even insisted there was no danger.

After dinner, Mr. Mason asked the landlord for his bill for bringing him out, but it, too, had been paid by Mr. F. Mr. Mason expressed his gratefulness, and the landlord appeared to feel as grateful as he did. He was one of those men who are as much pleased to see a friend receive a favor as if received by themselves.

The old man who kept the house where Mr. and Mrs. Mason stopped, was a very merry old gentleman, and delighted in telling laughable stories.

He told Mr. Mason, one day, that he must go with him to see a very singular sort of a house, and to learn a very singular circumstance which had taken place at that house a few weeks before. Mr. Mason became very anxious to know all about this house; and in a few days, he and Mr. R. rode over to see it.

It proved to be singular enough indeed. It was fifty feet long, and twenty feet wide, with one end sunk so far into the side of a very steep hill that the top of the house and the side of the hill were just even. There was no chimney built to the house, but in place of it, a part of the hill had been dug out in the shape of a fireplace and flue, about ten feet wide. No mantle-piece was needed, nor front to the flue; the house was so low—but a single story—that these would have been superfluous. In the middle of the house, and at each side, were doors, wide enough to let a yoke of oxen and sled pass in and out. Just in front of these doors the ground was

perfectly level, and widened out into a plain of some ten rods in width, between the foot of the hill and a brook which flowed by.

When large logs of wood were needed in the fire-place, which was always the case in winter, the old man, the proprietor of the house, would hitch his oxen to his sled, load it with wood, haul it into the middle of the house and unload it in the fire-place; then he would drive the oxen out at the other door. The house being very much like an old-fashioned double barn, it proved to be very convenient, so far as getting the fire-wood in was concerned.

This old man, among a large family of other children, had a full-grown daughter, and this daughter, as is very common among young ladies, had a beau, a young man from the adjoining neighborhood. He had come to see his beloved, one evening, and after the family had retired, at the other end of the house, fifty feet off, the young gentleman and lady were sitting by the fire, pretty close together, perhaps both upon one chair, and while they were thus closely engaged, perhaps fixing upon the day for their joyful union, they were terribly frightened by a horse suddenly dropping down the chimney into the fire just before them. They sprang up and screamed; while the horse groaned and kicked the fire all over that end of the house. In a little while the horse was on his feet in the middle of the floor, with main and tail all in a blaze of fire. By this time the old man had sprung from his bed, and hastening

to the scene of action, cried "What's the matter! Is the chimney on fire?"

As he drew near, he saw at once that his old blind horse, had been drawn up the hill side by his wonderful propensity for the green grass growing upon it, and that, wandering about, up there, in the dark, he had missed his footing and fallen down the chimney, to the no little alarm of the couple courting, and at the expense, to the horse, of his mane and tail, for they were both burnt off, with much of the hair on other parts of his body. The horse was soon led out of the house by the foretop, for that was gone, but by the under-jaw, and the usual quiet was restored.

A week from the time Mr. Mason again visited this house, having been called upon to perform the marriage rite between these two young persons.

The wedding may not be easily described, nor the peculiar dress of the bride, nor the salutations after the marriage. All of which must be left to the most brilliant imagination of the reader.

But it may as well be said that the ample fee of twenty-five cents was promptly paid over.

CHAPTER XVII.

New Appointment—Housekeeping broken up—Difficulty in finding a Boarding-House—Masonry.

THE Conference met in —, and so feeble was Mr. Mason's health, that, though he left home in good time, he did not arrive at the seat of the conference until some days after it had commenced.

It was the general understanding that he was to be sent to — Station, one of the largest and most disagreeable churches in the whole conference. The membership had been in difficulty among themselves for years, and generally made out to have a difficulty with the minister. Often did they follow their ministers to the conference, with very annoying complaints; and so common was this, and so common was it for one or more of the members to be there to select a minister, that the conference became very tired of them.

To go there, in Mr. Mason's state of health, was thought to be entirely out of the question. To avoid this, Mr. Mason sought an interview with his presiding elder, but he, being one of those very dignified men, especially at conference, would give him no satisfaction. All he would say was this—"We'll do right by you." "It'll be right."

Mr. Mason had so little confidence in these statements that he determined, at once, to have an interview with the bishop. This was sought, and after great difficulty, a promise was obtained that the interview might be had immediately after the adjournment of the conference.

Mr. Mason saw, from this, that but little could be accomplished, for that, of all other times, is the most unfavorable to anything like a gentlemanly, or satisfactory interview. The time arrived, however, and sure enough the bishop was engaged. An old colored man, who had known the bishop in other years, had rushed into his presence, and so completely arrested his attention that no one else could gain access to him.

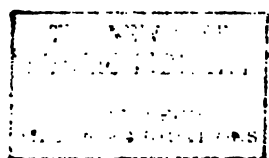
Mr. Mason waited until his patience and sense of propriety were outraged, when he walked to the bishop and asked, "Can I see you now, sir?" The bishop merely looked round and said, "I'm engaged at present."

Mr. Mason felt insulted, and walked off, determined to be heard through another channel. The oppressive course of the bishop and elders, together with the impoliteness of the bishop, and the cool violation of his word, were more than he could endure in his present feeble condition.

After dinner, he went to his room and wrote the following short but pithy note :



THEY WERE TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED BY A HORSE SUDDENLY DROPPING DOWN THE CHIMNEY INTO THE FIRE JUST BEFORE THEM. THEY SPRANG UP AND SCREAMED; WHILE THE HORSE GROANED AND KICKED THE FIRE ALL OVER THAT END OF THE HOUSE.



"REV. and DEAR BRO.:—My health is very feeble, on account of which I sought an interview with you; it was promised, and the time set by yourself, but the business of the colored gentleman came in just at that time, and, I suppose, was deemed of more importance than mine. This is to inform you, once for all, that *I protest* against going to—. I here pledge myself, if my appointment is read out for that place, that I will publicly rebel, and leave the Conference, if not the church. Oppression of this kind I will endure no longer. Yours,

"July—

L. MASON."

The letter was taken to the bishop, and immediately afterward Mr. Mason was sent for with the promise of an interview of any length of time.

To this Mr. Mason replied as follows:

"DEAR BISHOP:—It is very warm, and a great way to your boarding-house, and I am very feeble. I now wish no interview with you. 'What I have written, I have written.'"

"L. MASON."

Mr. Mason was confined to his room most of the next day, and was much occupied with the question of locating. His health was poor, and so was his purse, and if he located, what should he do for a living? To take an appointment, and fail to render efficient service, would only embarrass him more and more.

In this state of the case, he concluded to send for his faithful friend B., and be governed altogether by his decision. Mr. B. came, and after hearing a statement of the case, advised that an appointment should be taken, with the hope of renewed health in the fall. Mr. Mason thought this the best plan, upon

the whole, and concluded just to let the bishop and elders take their own course; but to —, he determined not to go.

The next day he was in the conference, and the bishop called him to him, and said:

"We wish you very much to go to —. You are wanted there."

"I cannot, and will not go there," replied Mr. Mason; "the people there will destroy me, as they have other ministers;" and turning about regained his seat.

At the close of the conference, Mr. Mason found himself appointed to — Station, at the extreme western edge of the conference. Although this was looked upon as a very pleasant place, yet Mr. Mason could not help thinking that this long move was intended to chastise him for his rebellion.

He returned home, and after a consultation with Mrs. Mason, whom he always advised with in even the smallest matters of his business, it was determined to sell out the few things they had, and board.

Many of their best articles were sold at private sale, and for a fair price, but what was left for the public sale went at a great sacrifice. The members of the church did not seem to be interested in the sale, farther than to get things as low as possible, but few bidding on any article. A gentleman present, thought this too bad, and stepping upon a box, announced that, rather than see the things go off at such a sacrifice, and by what appeared to be a set plan,

he would buy all there was there, and give it to the poor. This had a good effect for a short time, but soon the bidding nearly ceased, and things went about as low as they had before.

After all was sold, and the accounts settled, Mr. and Mrs. Mason started for their new and distant home. They arrived there in the night, the second after leaving, and stopped at a hotel. The next morning Mr. Mason went out to look for some of the members of the church, and to inquire for a boarding house. After some time he found a brother who was willing to go with him to see what could be done; but after spending the forenoon, no place was yet found but the hotel. Mr. Mason asked the landlord how much he charged for boarding, and was informed that four dollars was the price, but that he would make it a little less for two, occupying the same room.

In the afternoon, Mr. Mason was informed that the stewards would meet in the evening, in one of the class rooms, for the purpose of making out the allowance. At the appointed time, Mr. Mason was there; but there was neither light nor stewards. After waiting for some time, one came, and then another, and so on until five had assembled.

The meeting was called to order, and the brethren proceeded to business. The great and leading question came up first, of course.

"How many children have you?"

"Two," was the reply.

The stewards looked at each other with a smile, while one of them said :

"We are glad of this, for the last preachers we had, for the past few years, had so many children that we could scarcely support them."

"Couldn't," said another.

The next question was: "How much will it take to keep you?"

"I can't tell," said Mr. Mason, "it will depend upon how much boarding will cost."

"You are going to board then?" said one of the stewards.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Mason.

"Why," said the steward, "your wife will get so lazy and become so much of a lady, that we plain folks won't know how to get along with her."

"My wife," said Mr. Mason, "is much of a lady now; and if she should have a year of rest she needs it."

"Oh," said the steward, laughing and shaking himself, for he was a very fleshy man, "I mean no harm."

"I hope not," said Mr. Mason, "but I am growing quite tired of such remarks, they are too common at meetings of this kind."

"That's a fact," said another steward, "our preachers have to put up with too much."

After this little deviation from the main business, it was resumed.

"How much does good boarding, in a private house, cost?" asked Mr. Mason. No one could tell, as no private families in that town kept boarders.

"If you intend to board," said one of the stewards, "we can't tell what will be your claim, and had better meet some other time, or as soon as we can after we learn how much it will cost you to live." With this the meeting closed.

The next day another effort was made to obtain boarding in a private house, but with little success. Only one place appeared to be accessible, and there were objections to it of sufficient importance to induce Mr. Mason to prefer the hotel.

On the Sabbath a large congregation assembled to hear the new preacher. Mr. Mason was so feeble that he did not preach at night. He, however, called a meeting of the stewards, for Monday night, to finally dispose of the salary.

Meantime a lady called to see Mrs. Mason, and to advise her to keep house, saying that the tavern was no place for a preacher, and that her husband kept furniture, and chairs, and such like, and that they could buy of him, cheap.

"Is your husband a member of the church?" asked Mrs. Mason.

"Yes, ma'am," was the reply, "he's one of the class leaders.

Mrs. Mason saw through the whole affair, and said:

"We do not intend to keep house, even if we have to go to the country for boarding. I am," continued she, "nearly worn out, packing up and moving about among strangers."

"Oh," said the lady, "you mustn't get weary in well-doing," and off she went evidently disappointed that she could not secure a sale of her husband's furniture.

When the stewards met, it was agreed to allow Mr. Mason his *quaterage*, and eight dollars a week for himself and wife, for boarding, and pay for their washing.

"Now," said one of the stewards, a fine gentlemanly man, "you will have to stay at the hotel for the present. It is a very good house, and it may be, that, in the course of a few weeks you may get into some private house. But be in no hurry. Know what you are doing, for it is easy for strangers to be imposed upon. And if you can get board for less than we have allowed you, that, of course, is your own business. We agree to pay you so much, and you can make the best of it."

"Thank you, sir," said Mr. Mason, and the meeting closed.

The next morning, Mr. Mason asked the landlord to let him see his unoccupied rooms. They were shown very cheerfully, and a very large and pleasant front room, with a very small one connected with it, on the third story, were selected as the most suitable, except the fact of their being third story rooms.

"These rooms," said the landlord, "are so joined together that one must go with the other, and I will give you them both for six dollars and a half in the

summer and seven in the winter, and I will furnish fuel, if you will furnish your own light."

"I will see Mrs. Mason," said Mr. Mason; Mrs. Mason looked at the rooms and was much pleased with them. She thought it best to engage them at once, if the use of the parlor could be had to receive calls in.

This statement was made to the landlord, and agreed to at once.

The room was arranged and put in good order, and occupied that night. It proved to be the most pleasant room in the house, away from the noise, and yet affording a good view of a great part of the village.

Mrs. Mason and family remained in these rooms for two years, and were sorry to leave them even then.

During the course of the first three months, quite an excitement was raised about Masonry. It was said by many that it was one of the worst institutions in the world, and that no Mason could be a good man; and none took higher ground than Mr. Mason's church members. He was asked to preach against it, but refused. He was frequently found in company where it was condemned; but was never heard to say a word either for or against it.

It soon began to be whispered, "He's a Mason."

One old man determined to know all about it, and calling on Mr. Mason one day, he put the question direct.

"Are you a Mason?"

Fortunately a rap was heard at the door, and Mr. Mason rose to attend to it, and found the landlord's wife on her way to spend an hour with Mrs. Mason. This, of course, turned the old man's visit into a blank. But meeting Mr. Mason on the street one day, he stopped him, and again proposed the same question.

Mr. Mason felt a little hurt at this, and said to the old man, that he could not be drawn into the excitement about Masonry, and was not disposed to talk about it, or to answer any question. "And you," said he, "are treating me very unkindly, both as a minister, and a stranger, in trying to draw me into your foolish and useless excitement. You know very well that all this is a foolish waste of time, which might be better employed."

"That's a fact," said the old man, "but I believe you are a Mason, and I'll find out, in some way; and if you are, I'll never hear you preach again, for no Mason shall preach to me," and off he went both reproved and excited.

Time moved on for some months very quietly, until some one found a newspaper with a list of the officers of the Masons' Grand Lodge of —, and there was found in large letters, as large, at least, as any of the other — "Rev. L. Mason, Grand Chaplain."

This information went like a torrent, adding new fuel to the flame, already burning with great violence.

Men, women, and children, all knew that Mr. Mason was a High Mason, and must be a bad man." One old lady pushed her glasses over her cap-borders, and looked very wise for some time, and then asked the very grave question, whether Mr. Mason had helped to kill Morgan.

One said, "I should not wonder."

Another said, "He has a down look, and has been guilty of something."

Another said, "He's in bad health, and that's what makes him look so."

And still another said, "If he helped to kill Morgan I'll never darken that church door while he's here—no, that I won't."

"But stop," said a young lady who had been busy in reading a piece of poetry in an old newspaper, "I'm not a member of any church, and hope I never shall be, if joining a church doesn't make me a better girl. And I often think, when I hear church members abusing their ministers, that religion is all a sham."

"Now," said she, "I have known Mr. Mason ever since he first settled here, and I think him a Christian and a gentleman, and his wife is a perfect lady."

"Oh," said one, "your father's a Mason—that's why you take the preacher's part."

"My father is a Mason, I am proud to say," said the young lady, "and he is not a church member; but I never heard him abuse any person as you have your minister, and unless it is stopped I'll go straight and tell Mr. Mason every word you have said about him."

This unexpected rebuke, from one who made no profession of piety, quite astonished the *pious* old ladies, and they, after sitting in silence for some time, changed the subject.

The young lady, who had so deeply reproved these sisters, rose up to get her bonnet in view of leaving. She had been expected to stay for tea, of course, and was invited for that purpose. All were anxious that she should stay; but she refused, and said her feelings had been injured by what had been said about the minister, and she had about lost all confidence in professors; she felt like going home to weep.

The old ladies all rose up and made every apology, and said they did not intend to injure Mr. Mason, or any one else.

"It's too late," said the young lady, "so far as I am concerned, and all I ask of you now is, to make your apology to Mr. Mason, and then let him alone hereafter, and never speak to me on the subject of religion."

The reader may well suppose that the old ladies were well nigh petrified. They let the minister and his family alone. No more was said by them, about his being a Mason.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Protracted Meeting—The Wolf—The Collection—Falling away of the Converts—Reasons.

MR. MASON was invited to spend a Sabbath at —, in assisting brother —, during a protracted meeting. This meeting was intended to include New Year's day, and to compensate for the loss of several sermons, occasioned by high waters, and protracted meetings in other parts of the circuit.

According to engagement, Mr. Mason started early on Saturday morning, for the scene of his Sabbath labor. He intended to reach the neighborhood of the meeting and remain over night with a friend, that he might be refreshed and prepared for the service of the next day.

But when he arrived at the house of his friend, he heard the most glowing accounts of the success of the meeting: the house had been filled to overflowing twice every day for four days, and many of the hardest cases of the whole neighborhood had been brought into the church.

So powerful was the work, and so deeply was Mr. Mason's friend and his family interested in it, that it was agreed that all hands should go out that night. Part of this agreement was, that Mr. Mason should take his seat near the door, as a stranger, and not be

reported to the preacher in charge or any one else. In view of this, it was further agreed that all should go to church at rather a late hour. When they arrived at the meeting-house, which was very large, and situated on the summit of a hill, they found it packed so full, that with the greatest difficulty they found seats.

Under these circumstances Mr. Mason was, as he desired, wholly unnoticed. The meeting had just been opened, and the vast crowd were singing the hymn immediately preceding the sermon. It was one of great popularity in all the country, and one that often seemed to have no end, especially if the feelings had been wrought to a high degree of excitement, and if the brother who had the strongest voice had any poetical talent, or even a good imagination. The hymn was something like the following as near as can be remembered, for it is in no book that ever circulated in that region of country.

“ Away over in the promised Land,
Away over in the promised Land,
My Lord calls,
And I must go
Over to the promised Land.

We have brothers in the promised Land,
We have brothers in the promised Land,
My Lord calls
And I must go
Over to the promised Land.”

This was continued for a long time with such beginnings of verses as these: “We have sisters,” etc., “We have preachers,” etc., “We have houses,”

etc., including crowns, robes, harps, shouting, singing, classes, and numerous other possessions not now remembered.

This song had progressed to about its tenth verse, or whatever else they may be called, when one was heard clapping hands, another shouting glory, another screaming, and finally a number were on their feet, vociferating something at the very highest pitch of their voices.

By this time it was nearly eight o'clock, and there seemed to be some uneasiness in the stand, among the preachers, as to what course they ought to pursue. Finally, one arose, and in a calm manner, requested the singing to close. Some who had just commenced a word stopped suddenly, making a most fearful creaking, others continued to the end of the line, and so on until the singing gradually closed with those nearest the door.

All was now as still as if not a human being was in the house. As soon as order was secured, a fine-looking stranger arose and announced his subject. His discourse was very able and instructive, delivered in a very calm, and dignified, and solemn manner; but such had been the previous high state of excitement, and such was the intense heat of the house, although it was very cold weather, that most of the vast audience were fast asleep. The sermon had no effect, nor did the speaker seem to desire any other result than the sound instruction of the people. But that was the wrong time for such a discourse.

At the close of the sermon, a young preacher arose, and said, "Sing something, brethren." After some-time, one brother commenced that good old song beginning with these words:

"Where now is good old Daniel?"

He had scarcely started the tune, when more than a hundred voices were engaged in the inquiry as to the whereabouts of good old Daniel. But it was not long until he was found

"Safe in the promised Land."

The inquiry was continued for others—Wesley, Clarke, Watson, Fletcher, etc. And as, in the case of the former song, much of it was made, so far as adding the names was concerned, just as the occasion or memory seemed to serve. And just as the song progressed the excitement increased, until it was beyond description.

How many were at the altar as seekers could not be ascertained. Friends had sought out their friends all over the house, and brought them forward. This state of things continued until a late hour, when suddenly all was quiet. The preacher arose and said there was a wolf in the house. He knew there was for he had seen his teeth. He opened his hymn-book, and cried out, "Page 303, common meter. Now," said he, "this very hymn describes this wolf," and reading the following very descriptive lines:

"He comes, of hellish malice full,
To scatter, tear, and slay;
He seizes every straggling soul
As his own lawful prey."

He called on all to sing. But this time the singing had but little spirit, for there were but few books in the congregation, and the hymn had to be given out in two lines at a time.

The query was, what does all this mean? But the question was answered as soon as the hymn was sung. The preacher said, "There is a wolf in the house; he has been all round the altar among these seekers telling them not to join the church, for he was going to form a new church of more republican principles, in that neighborhood, and he wished them to join his church." With this, an old brother, near the window, with a red bandanna tied round his head, said, "You're right, brother, I hear'n him at it, and jist tell'd the young convert there to jine church this very meetin'."

"Very well," said the preacher, "and there are more than you heard him at it?"

These words had hardly escaped the speaker's mouth when a dozen voices were heard saying, "I did! I did! I did!"

By this time a tall, rough-looking man was on his feet near the center of the house. He asked to be heard in a very few words, which privilege was readily granted. Before he commenced all eyes were upon him, but without intimidating him in the least.

He said, "I should like to know what all this means! Give us the facts at once that we may know how to conduct ourselves, and what this wolf story means."

He took his seat in a very composed manner, when the preacher began to explain. He said, "There is a wolf here in sheep's clothing. He preached to you to-night. He's opposed to our church, and these meetings, and has tried to get away some of our young converts."

At this point of the explanation, the man who had preached took his hat and overcoat and walked quietly, but firmly down the aisle toward the door. Just as he passed out the preacher said, "The wolf is gone." when began a scene that beggars the power of man to describe. There was a general rush to the door, and the most deafening yells of "Stop him! stop him! Let us have his scalp!" Fortunately for this man, the night was dark, and he easily saved himself by standing close to a tree, as he afterward reported.

After the congregation had returned to the house, and become composed, the preacher informed the people who the man was; a preacher in the — church, whom he had met at the house where he was staying, and, being very weary, had asked him to preach. Here our friend in the center of the house again rose up, and gave it as his deliberate opinion, though a member of no church, that that preacher had been very roughly used. He said, if he knew where to find him, he would take him to his house, and keep him for a month, and have him preach every Sunday. "So would I! So would I!" came from a score of voices.

To finish this subject just here, it may be enough to say, that the strange preacher by some strange wandering, arrived at the house of this very man, and did remain with him for some time, preaching on the Sabbath, and ultimately formed a very respectable little church of his own persuasion.

When our friend took his seat, the preacher said, "It is very late, now, nearly one o'clock, and we must close — Brother Mason will preach to-morrow morning, at eleven o'clock — let us be dismissed."

As the congregation were leaving, Mr. Mason made his way to the stand and reported himself present. This greatly surprised the preacher in charge, and was the occasion of Mr. Mason's getting a good-natured scolding for not having reported himself sooner.

The next morning, at the appointed time, the house was filled to overflowing; and just about the time to commence the sermon it was thought best to take up a collection for the support of the preachers on the circuit.

During the singing of the second hymn, the officers waited on the large concourse of people, and received the full amount — all told — of *one dollar and thirty four cents*. The collection looked very much, in its several parts, as if it was very familiar with the region of country about Lake Superior. To judge of it according to the noise it made, as it was being aggregated in the crowns of the beavers, or according to the space it occupied when it was

undergoing the scrutiny of a most rigid mathematical process, much value would be indicated. It was *weighty* enough to be sure.

The sermon was now commenced, and as it advanced it became touchingly pathetic, and such was the effect, after so much liberality in the contributions, that Mr. Mason was compelled to sit down. No previous meeting had been attended with such a scene of excitement. All the people were on their feet at one time, and as they were packed together so closely, it was impossible to secure anything like order.

About three o'clock, very much exhausted with heat and violent exercise, the people began to disperse. After the house was emptied, it was found that the benches had all been piled up at each side of the house, and the floor resembling very much the floor of a Shaker's meeting house, except that it was neither so tight, so smooth, nor so clean. No appointment had been made for night service; but, taking it for granted that there would be meeting, the immense multitude returned.

Mr. Mason was expected to preach again, but such was the fixedness of purpose to have things their own way, the people occupied the time in singing, until singing was compelled to give way to all sorts of noise. The scene in the morning was repeated, except that there was no attempt to either sing, or pray, or take up a collection. At a very late hour the meeting closed with an appointment for a final meeting on Monday morning. At this

meeting, it was reported that seventy had been joined to the church in five days.

Four months after this, Mr. Mason met the preacher in charge, and on inquiry found that scarcely half a dozen of the whole seventy had done any good—their names had been dropped, some for one, and some another, form of crime, against the laws of the church.

This falling off was attributable to two causes, and these causes are at work all over the country, and working out just such results, though not on so large a scale, nor so rapidly.

One cause is, the entire absence of the instructive influence of pastoral oversight; the other is the manner in which the feelings are excited at the time persons are brought into the church. Exciting influences are brought to bear upon an excitable people, and thus the mind is drawn off from the realities of a true conviction of duty. And, beside all this, many feel that just as soon as the excited state of feeling passes away, they are just as they were before they were excited, except that both body and mind are prostrated. And again, it is rarely the case, that the feelings can be brought up to the same excited state by any subsequent influence, and, therefore, the person can perceive nothing of what is called growth, and is impressed with the conviction, that all was a delusion. And thus it is that doubts of the truth of religion are generated, and ripened into a settled skepticism or downright infidelity.

CHAPTER XIX.

Law-suit for marrying two Persons — The profitable Wedding —
Another difficulty about singing — Salary affected by it.

MR. MASON heard a rap at the front door about ten o'clock one night, and hastening to answer the call, he met two fine-looking young persons—a lady and gentleman. They were at once ushered into the parlor. The gentleman did not sit down before he invited Mr. Mason back again into the passage, and, handing him a paper, he said: "We wish you to marry us."

Mr. Mason unfolded the paper and looked at it by the dim light of the candle, as it shone out of the parlor, and supposing it to be all right, invited Mrs. Mason into the room, and proceeded at once to perform the ceremony. The parties requested a certificate of their marriage, which Mr. Mason readily gave.

Nothing more was thought of this for several days, until one morning in market, a brother minister asked Mr. Mason if an infuriated man had called to see him about the marriage of his minor daughter.

Mr. Mason answered that he had not.

The other minister said a man called at his house very much enraged, and said his daughter had been married a few nights before to a young man whom he was opposed to, and that he was determined to

make the minister who married them suffer, if he could find out whom he was. Mr. Mason at once suspected himself to be the man, and hurried home to examine the license. Comparing the handwriting with that of other papers of a similar kind, he found the last, or the suspected one, to differ from all the others. Just as he was engaged in this, the young man who had been married by him, rushed into the house, in great excitement, and without removing his hat, or taking a seat, he said:

"Mr. —, my wife's father is about to shoot me—he found the certificate of our marriage in my wife's trunk, and will be after you very soon."

"Is your wife now at her father's?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Yes," was the reply. "She went there the night we were married, but I went home."

"And have you not seen her since?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Yes," said the young man, "but I do not stay there."

"How did the old man find out that you and his daughter were married?" asked Mr. Mason.

"Why," said the young man, "my wife told him she was married, and that she was going away the next day, and with that, her father pushed her into her room and locked her up, and started off to find the minister who married us—he was in a great rage. He was not long gone before he returned, and entered

my wife's room, and broke open her trunk, and there found your certificate."

"How did you get the license?" said Mr. Mason.

The young man hastened out of the house and gave no reply, and that was the last of him. He had been intimate with some of the clerks in the office, and, it is supposed, obtained a blank license and filled it up himself.

That evening the young lady effected her escape from her father's house, and joined her young, heroic husband, at some point, and both made their escape. Meanwhile the suit was commenced against Mr. Mason in due form. This excited some interest among the attorneys, and two of them, very able men, agreed to defend Mr. Mason free of any charge. They visited his house, and asked to see the license. It was produced, and taken to the clerk's office, and found to be a forgery—a blank filled up by some one not connected with the office. The two attorneys assured Mr. Mason that he was in no danger, and advised him to let the old man go ahead.

After some reflection, Mr. Mason called on the young lady's father, and found him in great wrath. He pulled the certificate from his pocket, and presenting it to Mr. Mason, said: "Do you acknowledge this to be your handwriting?"

"I do," said Mr. Mason.

"Will you say so before witnesses?" continued the old man.

"I will," said Mr. Mason.

The old man requested Mr. Mason to remain until he would bring in some two or three respectable men.

In a few minutes the old gentleman returned, very much softened in his feelings, by the prospect of his success with his witnesses.

As soon as all were seated, Mr. Mason asked the old gentleman to produce the marriage certificate, which was readily done.

"This, gentlemen," said Mr. Mason, "is a regular marriage certificate, filled up in my own handwriting. I married the persons whose names appear on the face of it, and according to the date at the bottom. The names here are the same that I found in the license."

"Did you have a license?" said one of the gentlemen.

"I did," said Mr. Mason, "and supposed, of course, that all was right."

"Let me see the license," asked one of the gentlemen.

"It is in the hands of my lawyers," said Mr. Mason, "and can be proved to be a forgery."

The old man started from his seat very much excited, and said: "That remains to be seen yet!"

Mr. Mason said: "I know that I have been deceived, gentlemen, as well as this man," pointing to the young lady's father, "and have just called to have the thing fully explained, and understood, that there may be no further difficulty, and that I

may not be published as a violator of any order or law of my country."

"It's all a sham," said the old man, "and I'll punish you to the full extent of the law."

"Very well," said Mr. Mason, and taking his hat, he left.

In a few days, Mr. Mason's lawyer said to him, that the suit would not be prosecuted; that they had told the old man, his son-in-law had been guilty of a forgery, and the least that was said about the whole thing the better. And so it turned out; the suit never was prosecuted.

But the difficulty did not end here. Many of the members of Mr. Mason's church were greatly excited, and said they never would hear him preach, because he had taken an oath to support the constitution of the state, and now had violated it; no perjured man could preach to them. And sure enough, many of them left the church. While Mr. Mason was toiling to get the troubled waters quieted, a young man of wealth came to him and asked him if he could be absent from the city about four days, at a certain time.

"I can," said Mr. Mason, "if those four days will not include the Sabbath."

"They will not," said the young man. "I wish you to leave with me on Monday, and we will return on Thursday."

"What do you wish with me?" inquired Mr. Mason.

"I will not say now," said the young man, "but you shall know shortly."

The next day, Mr. Mason received the following note, inclosing a line from another letter:

"REV. BRO. MASON—Dear Sir— You will please call at the tailor-shop of Mr. —, he wishes to see you. J. J. L.

"P. S. Destroy the inclosed.

"— I am glad that you so heartily agree with me to invite my old pastor to our wedding. I will be almost as joyful to see him as to see yourself."

Mr. Mason went to Mr. —'s tailor-shop, as directed. Mr. — said, "I am ordered to measure you for a suit of clothes. What kind of a coat will you have, frock or dress?"

"Dress," said Mr. Mason.

The measures for coat, vest, and pants were taken, and Mr. Mason was asked to select the materials.

"I will leave all that to yourself," said Mr. Mason to Mr. —, "except the vest. I prefer a plain black satin."

"I am ordered, also," said Mr. —, "to furnish you a pair of fine kid gloves, and a white silk pocket-handkerchief. Please select the gloves." Mr. Mason gave his number, and a pair was produced which fitted exactly.

"Your clothes will be done next Saturday," said Mr. —, "and I will send them up to you."

Saturday came, and the clothes were sent as promised. Everything was a complete fit, though rather too high in the fashion for Mr. Mason's taste. He put on his new suit, on the Sabbath morning, and went to church.

Just as he was leaving the church the young gentleman who had requested four days of his time, handed him the following,

"DEAR SIR — A carriage will call for you early to-morrow morning, one week.
J. J. L."

Mr. Mason was truly glad of this, for he wished to enjoy himself at the wedding, and in order to this he desired to wear his new clothes until they got well set to his body, and until the stiffness would leave them. He never could enjoy himself in new articles of apparel until after he had worn them about a week.

The wedding was expected to be a very elegant affair, and Mrs. Mason set to in order to have her husband look not only worthy of the occasion, but worthy of herself.

Her first order was, that Mr. Mason should go to the barber-shop and have his hair and whiskers trimmed in the neatest manner. Meanwhile, she set about getting the linen — the socks — the linen pocket-handkerchiefs — the cravats etc, etc., in their very best order.

When Mr. Mason returned from the barber-shop Mrs. Mason pronounced his hair and whiskers to be done up just right. She looked at the gold buttons that Mr. Mason wore in his shirt bosom, and ordered them to be taken to the silversmiths to be cleaned. So off went Mr. Mason to get the buttons in order. They were polished so well that they looked as good as new. In a day or two the linen, etc., were all ready, and Mrs. Mason brought them into the study to show

to her husband. They were examined and pronounced just right.

Now for the packing of the carpet-sack. This Mrs. Mason always attended to herself, and it was done in the most particular manner, the tooth-brush, the hair-brush, etc., were all in little packages by themselves, and so arranged that they would not injure each other.

After this was all done, Mrs. Mason presented herself, as she usually did about wedding times, and said, "Now, Mr. Mason, I expect you will get a handsome fee, and, you know, that will be mine. I need a little money, just at this time, and it will come in good place."

Mr. Mason left at the time appointed. He had been gone but a few hours when a boy left the following note.

"MRS. MASON, will call at my store at any time, and get goods to the amount of \$50.
"D. S. M."

Between this unexpected note, and her solicitude for her husband's success at the wedding, and the inquiry, what shall I get that will do us the most good? Mrs. Mason was no little perplexed. Mr. Mason arrived safely with his company, on Tuesday morning, at the place of the wedding. It was agreed that all should stop at the hotel, and remain there till the appointed hour—ten o'clock in the evening.

But as soon as it was known they were there, Mr. Mason was sent for, and taken to the bride's house. He was received as if he had been a long absent

brother, for he had been the pastor of the church, to which the family belonged, for two years. He was there but a short time before the proposed bride came in, and reminded him of her request four years before. It was this: "If ever I get married, I wish you to be present, even if you should be a great distance off—will you promise me to come?" This was contained in a letter from the young lady to Mr. Mason, after he had given up the charge of the church.

The time passed off very pleasantly till the hour appointed for the marriage, when the very height of enjoyment was the blessing of all present.

Mr. Mason, and the young gentleman and his bride, returned on Friday, all happy and well.

Mr. Mason had been at home but a short time, before his wife asked how much the fee was.

"Nothing," said Mr. Mason, "but the suit of clothes, and, I am sure, that is ample."

"It is so," said Mrs. Mason, "that suit is worth sixty dollars." And putting her hand in her pocket, she drew out the note from the merchant and handed it to her husband.

Mr. Mason at once said: "That is your part of the fee, for I know that order came from the young man I have married."

"The merchant himself," said Mrs. Mason, "may have taken a notion to be kind to us."

"Never," said Mr. Mason. "He is too fond of money. He keeps a fine quality of goods, and at

liberal prices, and is a very fine man, but very close: that came from my friend."

Two or three days passed off, and Mr. and Mrs. Mason called to see the newly-married couple, at the bridegroom's father's. Mrs. Mason and the bride had a very happy meeting, and a renewal of old and very sacred friendship.

"Now," said Mrs. Mason, after she and her husband left, "we must have a tea, and a few select friends, some evening soon, for the special benefit of this happy and generous couple."

"All right," said Mr. Mason, "I have no doubt it will be quite agreeable."

The next day Mr. Mason went to the post-office, and found a letter from some one in the city. On opening it he found a check for one hundred dollars, with a request to receive it as a present from "Yours, affectionately, J. J. L."

Mr. Mason felt himself embarrassed with the liberality of his friend, and scarcely knew what to do by way of gratitude. But pleasure is often followed with pain, and prosperity with adversity.

The next Sabbath morning, when he went to the church, he found the choir, which had formerly occupied pews in the center of the house, snugly seated in the gallery. As soon as service had commenced, many of the old members of the church rose up and left, giving strong signs of anger.

Mr. Mason was scarcely at home, before one after another called for their certificates. Mr. Mason

refused to give them certificates before an effort was made to reconcile the difficulty. But all was of no use. The certificates must be had. And thus, in place of the holy Sabbath being a day of sweet rest, it was a day of anger and wickedness, occasioned by the narrow views of some professing Christians. Many of those who left were in the habit of paying a fair proportion of the necessary amount for the support of the church. And many of those who remained refused to pay what they were in the habit of paying, simply, as they said, because the preacher would not take the authority of controlling the singing, and all who were connected with it, and bring the choir to its former place. Others, again, were opposed to singing by note, and in favor of what they were pleased to call old-fashioned singing. So, upon the whole, they managed to get the church and the minister into deep trouble, and themselves into a spirit that was like anything else than the Christian spirit. And, as if to make things wear as bad an aspect as possible, the choir itself got into trouble. Sometimes one was present, and sometimes all; and sometimes the choir would sing, and sometimes there was no singing by any body in the church.

When the year closed up, Mr. Mason was minus nearly one half of his salary; and some were disposed to say that the salary was more the cause of the trouble with some, than the choir.

CHAPTER XX.

The little Fortune — The adopted — Her Marriage — Her Letter

MRS. MASON'S father was by no means a man of great fortune, though he had an abundance for all useful purposes. He was a man of ease, but a good manager. If he did not work with his own hands, he was very capable of having it done in the very best manner. His farm, which joined the village, was in the very highest state of cultivation, and yielded quite enough for the support of his two tenant-families and his own, which was but small.

Though not a member of a church himself, he was very careful in the observance of the Sabbath, and liberal in his contributions to the cause of religion, and very sure to be in his own pew, with his family, listening attentively to the messages of peace, twice every Sabbath. The Bible was the favorite book of the family; and scarcely another family could be found more familiar with its contents.

Honesty and a good education were the chief ornaments that his heart desired to bestow on his children. For the former he presented the power of precept and the influence of a good example; and for the latter he made ample provision in his will, which he always kept by him. His health was feeble, and he knew not the hour he might be called hence. He often said, that he did not expect to live to see his

children well educated, but that after he was gone, he hoped his most cherished desire might be executed, and that no expense should be spared in doing so.

At an unexpected hour he was called upon to exchange worlds. That was a sad time for his family. That day was the beginning of sorrow and disappointment. In a few months a raging fire consumed the family mansion, the rebuilding of which gave dishonest men access to the very vitals of the estate.

The children were liberally educated, though with some difficulty, and when the youngest was of full age the amount coming to each child, in place of being thousands, was but a few hundreds.

When Mrs. Mason received her share, though small, she determined to make it useful in doing good.

She came into Mr. Mason's study, one Monday morning, with unusual cheerfulness, and, taking her seat near the table, began to unfold her plan.

"You know," said she, "that our system of moving about not only keeps us poor, but it deprives me of doing any permanent good to others. I may begin a work, but before it is matured, we are gone, and the work ends. But now, I think, I have a plan that will work well, and one that moving cannot well injure."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Mason.

"It is this," she replied. "You know our family is small, and that you have been getting along pretty well for a few years, through the liberality of kind

friends; and then the small amount that I have from father's estate, will aid us very much in doing a little more than merely keeping ourselves."

"The Lord has been very kind to us," said Mr. Mason, "and I desire you to do just as you please. What do you propose doing?"

"I have thought for a long time," said Mrs. Mason, "that I would love to find some worthy young girl, who would be willing to come into our family, and be one in common with us."

"That is a good thought," said Mr. Mason, "but I doubt our ability to educate one as we would our own, with our small means."

"I have thought of that too," said Mrs. Mason, "but I have thought of this, also. Our common schools are now of a high grade, and afford better facilities for a good education than many so-called seminaries do; and it is not likely now, that we will ever be sent out of reach of one of these schools."

"That is true," said Mr. Mason, "and though the common schools are not considered, by a certain class of persons, as quite respectable enough, yet they are the best schools we have; — and then parents can have the pleasure of keeping their children at home with them."

"Very true," said Mrs. Mason, "we can send to one of these schools, and if we find ourselves able, we can send the children, for a few sessions, to some seminary and have them graduate."

"The plan is a most excellent one," said Mr. Mason; "and now, what do you wish to do, my dear?"

"In view of getting the money I now have, I have been looking all over the Sabbath school, for some months, to find a girl of twelve or fourteen, that I might be likely to get; and yesterday morning I found the very one."

"Who is that," inquired Mr. Mason.

"It is Lucy Young; she is so sweet, and so faithful and intelligent."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Mason. "It would insult her mother very much to intimate such a thing."

"I am aware," said Mrs. Mason, "that they are a high-minded family; they were once wealthy, but now they are very much reduced, and must divide out among their friends. The old man has not been heard of for more than two years, and they cannot get along by themselves."

"I will think this all over," said Mr. Mason, "and report to you at dinner—I wish, now, to arrange a text, suggested to my mind early this morning; I have the plan of a sermon on it, and wish to write it down now, lest it be lost."

"And I will think more of it too," said Mrs. Mason, as she left the study.

Dinner time arrived, and the first thing that Mrs. Mason said, after they were seated at the table, was to express her confidence that she could get Lucy Young.

"I believe you can, too," said Mr. Mason, "but how will you go about introducing it to Lucy's mother?"

"That will all come right," said Mrs. Mason. "I believe all this to be the work of God, that we may have increased happiness ourselves, and be the means of imparting comfort to, at least, one. And I believe, moreover," said she, "that our heavenly Father will be angry with us, if we do not do something of this kind. And if we do what appears to be our duty now, trusting in God for all future contingencies, he will bless and prosper us."

"You are becoming very orthodox," said Mr. Mason, "at least, in the doctrine of Providence." Mr. Mason apologized for attempting to turn into pleasantry so grave a subject, and said that Mrs. Mason might manage this whole subject herself.

"Not at all," said Mrs. Mason, "you will have to act a prominent part, in whatever I do in this matter."

"You don't mean to say by this," said Mr. Mason, "that I must introduce this matter to Mrs. Young?"

"If need be; it can do no harm, and it will do you good to bear the cross in the way of well-doing," said Mrs. Mason.

"But we may be suspected of being selfish," said Mr. Mason; "and if Lucy should come, she may be mortified by being called a hired girl, by some of our would-be-genteels."

"We may look for that, or something else," said Mrs. Mason, "for well-doing always has its troubles."

Dinner was over but a short time, and Mr. Mason was sitting deeply engaged in reading a well-written article, advising ministers and churches to avoid any agitation of the slave question, as dangerous not only to peace, but to the slave; when a little boy quietly stepped in and gave him a neatly-written note, as follows:

"Mrs. Young, will be glad to see Mr. Mason, at any time this afternoon, at No. —, on — street."

After reading it, and carefully reflecting upon the probable Divine influences at work, he called for his wife and asked her if she had spoken to Lucy, or any one else, upon the subject discussed at the dinner-table.

"Never named it to a soul but yourself," said Mrs. Mason. "Why do you ask?" The note was handed to her, and she pronounced at once upon what was Mrs. Young's desire. "Now," she continued, "I have no doubt that Lucy will be ours before the week ends, and I will be so glad, and shall do so much to make her happy."

"Wife," said Mr. Mason, "you will get yourself wrought up to such an enthusiasm of feeling, that, if you are disappointed, you will feel very badly."

"No," said Mrs. Mason, "I am certain my long-cherished desire shall be realized, and Lucy will be one of our family."

Nature had done much for Lucy Young, and so had refined and intelligent art. Her mother was one of God's own jewels—refined, pious, gentle, and

intelligent. The subduing influence of adversity had only made her graces shine the more brightly. Her dignified dependence seemed to make even dependence itself a means of illustrating the blessings of being in humble circumstances.

The large mansion that she had occupied for years, and where many a hungry one had been fed, and where sorrow had often been mitigated by the cheerful word, or the liberal gift, was in the hands of much less worthy occupants. The widow got no comfort there, and the little beggar girl was cruelly driven from the door. Many a heart sighed as they said: "How changed!" and many a tear was shed when it was said: "Poor Mrs. Young!—she was once rich and liberal, but she is now very poor."

Her former admirers, who thought it a credit to themselves to associate with Mrs. Young, now passed her by in cold formality. Meeting her on the sidewalk, in place of making, as they often did, ungraceful efforts to speak to her, now were attracted by some trifling toy in the show-window of the toy-shop.

Mrs. Young was too unsuspecting and too generous to believe that all this was intentional, and would often press herself, under the warm impulse of a pure heart, and the remembrance of former friendship, into the presence of her old admirers; not to obtain any gift, or any assistance—she was too noble for that—but to have the luxury of friendship and kind words. But after a long time, she found that friendship is too often governed by the mere influence of

circumstances. This pained her, but was borne without a murmur.

Lucy was her third child; and the last but one, a sweet little boy of ten summers. He knew no trouble—his was the dream-life—and the only unsolved mystery of his life was indicated by the question, a thousand times put, "Why are you so sad, mother?"

That question couldn't be answered to the satisfaction of one so young. It was answered in later years.

Lucy was beautiful, mild, cheerful, kind—a companion for the aged, or for the child—well formed, light complexion, blue eyes, florid cheeks, with a thousand ringlets gracefully wreathing about her snow-white neck and shoulders, and kissing each other as they were moved by the graceful motion of Lucy's head.

At four o'clock, Mr. Mason called at No. ——. He found Mrs. Young in her usual place, at the window, and surrounded by her accustomed neatness. Lucy and her little brother were soon called in, and while Mr. Mason was kindly speaking to Lucy of her healthful appearance, her mother said, with indescribable pathos and the most delicate solicitude—"Mr. Mason, would you like to have Lucy in your family?" A big tear found its way into one of the deeply-creased furrows of her face, and coursed its way till it fell off her cheek.

Mr. Mason could not answer for a moment, so full was his heart of gratitude, that now his wife's

desire to do some worthy one a real good, was about to be consummated. And then such a lovely one was to be the subject.

Mrs. Young's countenance lighted up with a powerful effort to be cheerful, and said: "Lucy has been telling me, for weeks, how well she would like to live in your family; and how much she loved Mrs. Mason and yourself, and this morning she gave me no rest until I sent you that note."

Mr. Mason looked at Lucy, and asked her if she could be contented to live in his family, and be moved about among strangers, and not see her mother for a year or two.

Lucy burst into tears, and threw her arms around her mother's neck, and kissed her, and said: "I love mother, but it is so hard for her to get along, and I love Mrs. Mason, and want to go and stay with her just as her daughter."

This was more than a match for Mr. Mason's control of his own heart, and taking Lucy by the hand, he said, as best he could: "Lucy, you shall have a part in my poor home, and be as one of my own as long as you wish. I will educate and clothe you just as my own."

This was enough for Lucy, it was enough for her mother. Tears, like great big pearls, chased each other over both their cheeks.

Lucy sobbed, and said: "When shall I go?"

"Now, if you choose," said Mr. Mason. Lucy looked at her mother for an answer.

Mrs. Young said: "This is so unexpected and so sudden, though a long-cherished desire, that I scarcely know what to say. Will you, and Mrs. Mason call down after tea?"

"We will," said Mr. Mason, "most cheerfully."

As soon as Mr. Mason got into his own house, his wife ran to meet him, asking what Mrs. Young wanted, and if Lucy was coming.

Mr. Mason was too sad to be jocular, though he might have had much amusement by evading a direct answer to his wife's questions.

He said: "Lucy is coming, and I am glad."

"And so am I," said Mrs. Mason, "and I hope we will be able to make her happy."

"God will help us. This is all the doing of His providence, but I know that we shall feel embarrassed, feeling ourselves so directly the instruments of doing good to one so worthy and so dependent."

At the time appointed, the call was made, and to the surprise and joy, too, of Mr. and Mrs. Mason, Lucy was ready, her trunk packed and all, to depart for her new home.

Seeing the eagerness of Lucy to get off, and expecting that a long call would only embarrass Mrs. Young, Mr. and Mrs. Mason and Lucy left, giving Lucy's trunk into the care of a drayman to be taken to Lucy's new home.

The choir of Mr. Mason's congregation had a meeting, that night, in the church, and Lucy being

one of its members, all called there, and spent a very pleasant hour.

Lucy was so cheerful that many asked for the reason, and to some of her most intimate friends she communicated, what to her was a pleasing fact, that she was going to make her home with the minister. As soon as this was known, some were rejoiced, while others, in a low and imploring whisper, asked Mrs. Mason, if she had hired Lucy Young by the week.

In a few days Mrs. Mason presented Lucy with a dress, and new bonnet, together with an elegant little Bible and hymn-book, just to match her own, with Lucy's name on the side of each.

She presented these, her first gifts, with the single request that Lucy should leave the choir, as it was well supplied with members, and sit with her in the minister's pew. To this Lucy readily consented, and from this until Lucy left them, she was the constant companion of Mrs. Mason.

Much was said, as well as conjectured by the gossips, and sometimes it wounded, but generally passed unnoticed.

One evening a young man of rather low but purse proud family, called to accompany Lucy to church. She promptly refused him, which met with the entire approbation of Mr. and Mrs. Mason. In a few evenings he called again, and Lucy not being present, Mrs. Mason gave him to understand that his calls would not be encouraged.

The young man, not being accustomed to refined life, and wishing to exculpate himself, said, he had been sent there.

“By whom?” asked Mrs. Mason.

“By Mrs. — and Mrs. —,” answered the young man.

“Why did they send you?” asked Mrs. Mason. No answer was given, but the young man left.

In a few days it leaked out that these two women had joined together to induce this low young man to visit Lucy, just to mortify her.

As soon as Mr. Mason got this case arranged so that there could be no mistake about it, he called upon these ladies, with a responsible friend, and the witnesses, and, to their great mortification, convicted them of a base attack upon the feelings of an innocent, and, almost, parentless young lady.

In five years from the time Lucy came into Mr. Mason’s family, she was joined in marriage to a young man of wealth, family and education, and removed to — in the State of —.

In three years from the marriage, and after several months of silence, such as often occurs between the most intimate friends and faithful correspondents, the following letter, in part, was received by Mrs. Mason.

“DEAR FRIENDS—But this does not express my feelings—I would rather say, dear parents, for you have been to me as parents. * * * I was happy at home—I was happy with you—I am happy now, in my own domestic relations. My dear mother is with me,

and she says, almost every day, 'Oh how much you owe to that dear family.' I feel it, and I know this is your reward. * * * *
But for the miniatures, which I kiss every day, or I should be compelled to see you often, though we are hundreds of miles apart. * * * *

"When will you come and see us? Mr. — says if he was sure you could come at a given time, he would most cheerfully check your expenses. Do not be offended if he does this. He is able, and it will do him more good to do so, than it will you to receive it. * * *

"Our minister's name is —. He has been here for eight years, and it is so pleasant to have him call in so familiarly, and so often

"I often pity you, when I think of your having to move so many times, and to be so much among strangers. And I frequently think it so strange that there is no change in that old rule, or that Mr. Mason does not go to some church where he can be settled. He would be so much more useful than he is now, or can be under the shifting influence of such a rule. I do not say this because Mr. Mason has not talent to be useful anywhere, or because it has been my fortune to be united with another branch of the Church, with quite different rules, but because I know your long and settled aversion to being hawked about through the country, as if you were not capable of staying more than two years in any one place." * * * *

Letters, such as Mr. and Mrs. Mason get from Lucy, do their hearts more good, and afford them more real comfort, than the most enlarged worldly possessions. They feel that in her case they have done a real good, to one who was worthy, and the consciousness of this is an ample reward.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Woman of Prayer—Her success—Change of Church relation.

THE western part of the State of —, is noted for piety. But few are found not connected with some branch of the Church; and especially is this true with the females. This is but another proof, however, that the natural instinct for devotion, so prominent in mankind, is the more prominent in woman. She is generally the first in every cause of love and mercy, and her perseverance knows no end but the accomplishment of her object. The uniform success of her importunities over the harder and more inflexible, and less devotional heart of man, is but a prelude, or rather an illustration of her power to wrestle and prevail with a higher power. And where men will faint and become discouraged, and give up all as lost, there it is that woman is strong and continuous in her efforts, and full of faith and hope. Years may be needed to bring about the desired end, but their slow revolutions only increase the intensity of woman's purpose to achieve the cherished end, and possess a conquest over the much-loved object.

Her weapons are not carnal, for she has neither strength nor skill to use these, but spiritual and mighty. Her whole nature is a most eloquent prayer, and her whole prayer is but a significant index to her universal dependence. And not till infidelity, or

the kindred spirit of hatred of the laws of God, have perverted her being, will she claim in the nation, the state or the army, those places which are naturally appropriated to the other sex. Conventions to restore what is vainly supposed to be lost, is one of the creations of the later days of departure from propriety, and a place where the truth has but little control of the heart.

When we think of virtue, truth and religion, we naturally look for the incarnation of these virtues in woman's heart. But alas! some of these hearts are infidel. What? a woman an infidel! No perversion that can be thought of, is equal in unnaturalness to that of a woman turning infidel, and no heart can be more corrupt than woman's when she falls from virtue and truth.

But differing from all such examples, and illustrating, in part, the true nature of woman's being, and woman's mission, is the character now to be noticed.

Miss M. M—— was the only daughter of a pious and exemplary, as well as intelligent Scotch lady. Her father, like too many fathers in these days, was dissipated, disagreeable in his family, if not cruel, and, of course, poor. He was kind to all but those of his own family, and fond of the society of all but of his own household. His wife, finding that all must be lost—both body and soul—determined to foil the circumstances that looked to this end, by a higher piety and the nobler virtues. She armed herself for the conflict, and fled to the rescue of her children.

M—— was the eldest and the first of the conquest, and with her the other children—two boys. M—— was handsome and intelligent, though educated in very common schools. Caring less for science than she did for religion, she made the Bible her chief book. Indeed, she had scarcely education enough to know how useful a scientific education is. She, with millions of others—the whole world, if you please—have cause for joy that religion is not designed for the educated alone. While it is surely the friend of correct literature, encourages its growth, and calls upon science for demonstrations of its divine origin, it does not make a certain degree of mental training in science a condition of its regenerative power. If so, Mary, for that was her full name, could not have been as bright an example of piety as she was, nor could it be said of her, when a wife, that the sanctified wife shall sanctify the unsanctified husband.

Mary was called upon by a young man of the adjoining county, to decide the grave question of becoming his companion for life.

The only objection in the way was not in his family connections, nor in his habits of industry and economy, nor in his general morality, as far as was known—but he was not religious. When he called for the answer to his proposition, his want of a religious profession, was made the only difficulty in the way. To remove this, for he loved Mary, he pledged every assistance to her religious

life that he could. He promised never to be in her way when she wished to attend religious meetings. He further said, that when his time came he would be pious too.

"But," said Mary, "your time for being pious has come now. It is said in the Testament, 'Now is the time,' and you cannot make that an excuse."

"Yes," he replied, "but that passage refers to such as have been prepared, and are just ready to be converted—it is said to them, 'Now is the time.'"

"I think it refers to all persons and at all times," said Mary.

"But," said the young man, "I believe if I am to be saved, I will be, and if not I must be lost—and so I will just have to wait and see."

"But in waiting, you may wait just a little too long," said Mary.

"I can't help that," was the reply, with an evident desire to change the subject. Moving his chair a little closer to Mary, he again requested to know how the main question should be disposed of.

"I thought," said Mary, "that religion was always the main question."

"So it is," replied the young man, "but there is a time for all things, and so there is for that, and also for our business too."

"If you were a member of any church," said Mary, "I should not hesitate. I love you, but fear the consequence of marrying a man of no pretensions to a life of piety."

"You are perfectly right," said he, "but I do not feel like being religious now, and will promise you, that I will never object to you doing as you please in these matters."

In less than six months they were married and settled on a farm in an obscure part of the country, and more than five miles from any church.

Mary soon found that difficulties were in her way, and that her Sabbaths must be spent at home as best she could. The horse was either lame, tired, or without shoes, or something else was in the way every Sabbath there was service in the church which she wished to attend.

In process of time also, her husband became fond of his gun, and sport in the woods. Part of the Sabbath mornings were spent in cleaning the gun, and running bullets preparatory to a hunt for game. This, of course, was very afflicting to Mary's heart, and often did she express her fears that some accident might befall him in the woods where there would be no one to care for him. It was evident that this made some impression on his mind, for after this he was careful to have some one go with him, as he said, to assist in bringing home what he might kill.

Mary could not divest herself of the belief that this constant violation of the Sabbath, was either to provoke her, or to get rid of the heavy movement of the holy hours, and the presence of herself as she read the holy Word. She often thought how hard it must be for an unconverted man to engage in Bible

reading, or religious conversation, and as often did she feel condemned for making even this apology for sin. But, true to her purpose, she still continued to wrestle in prayer that her husband might be a changed man; and, as if to encourage this purpose she often felt deeply impressed with the belief of final success.

Some six years after their marriage, and at a time that she least expected it, her husband came in one Sabbath morning, after attending to his horses and cattle, and said: "Mary, if you wish to go to church to-day you can have one of the horses."

Mary could not refrain from tears as she looked at him, and said: "I am truly glad, for it is so long since I have heard preaching that I desire very much to go."

Her husband said she might stay for class meeting, too, if she wished, if doing without dinner so long would not injure her. Mary thought of the angels' food, and of the hidden manna, and promptly said: "I will leave dinner for you and Samuel," for that was the name of their sweet little flaxen-headed boy, "and I will take a few biscuit with me."

"Very well," said he, "now get ready, for you have five miles to ride, and you have no time to spare."

Mary was ready in a short time, and so was the horse.

She had been gone but a few hours when her husband began to feel insufferably lonely. He took

down the Bible and found verses, here and there, marked with a pencil, and an occasional piece of paper with some pious thought expressed upon it; and near the beginning of the book he found a half sheet of paper folded into a small book, with such notes as these: "Finished reading Genesis, July 2d;" "Finished reading the Psalms, June 8th;" "Finished reading the Old Testament, December 29th."

After looking over this little book with care, he found that his wife had read the Scriptures through about twice every year.

But after this discovery and calculation, he read but little, if any, and was much inclined to change his ways. He thought of the meek and quiet spirit of his wife, and of the injustice he had so often committed on her feelings, not only by keeping her from church, but by hunting and shooting on the holy Sabbath.

In order to relieve himself, and amuse his little boy, who had just waked out of sleep, he took a walk down the lane in front of the house. At the end of this lane he got upon the fence to sit a while, with his boy beside him. Here he sat near half an hour, often looking down the road for his wife. Meanwhile, he said: "Samuel, do you love your mother?"

"Yes indeed," said Samuel, smiling because he had the privilege of saying he loved his mother.

"What does she do," asked his father, "when she takes you into the little room?"

"Oh," said Sammy, still smiling and clasping his hands together softly, "mother prays down on her

knees. She prays for you and me, and she cries, and laughs, and kisses me, and tells me to be good. And father, she prays for you to be good too, that we may all be happy."

In a short time he was on his knees, in his wife's prayer-room, in deep distress. After being in this posture for sometime, he arose and took his seat by a small table. The drawer was partly open, and he saw enough of the corner of a piece of paper to see the words, "My husband," in his wife's handwriting. On opening the drawer, he found the paper to be one loose leaf of a small book in which his wife kept a record of mental impressions with regard to his conversion. It contained remarks like these—"He seems to be growing harder;" "He is less careful of his words—sometimes is very profane;" "I am discouraged;" "To-day—all day—my hope of him is strong;" "Oh, if he would read the Bible and go to church;" "I believe he will be saved yet." The book was nearly full of similar records, sometimes of joyful confidence, and at others of depression of faith. These, with "she prays for you," almost petrified his very heart, and extorted from him many words of self-condemnation, together with a deep desire, as he afterward expressed it, to be "a Sabbath-keeping man."

Little Samuel came running in laughing and clapping his hands, saying "Mother is coming—mother is coming." His father sprang up as if

afraid of being caught in the prayer-closet of his wife, and ran out to meet her.

She had not yet arrived, and he had time to suppress his feelings and adjust the muscles of his face, so as to appear as usual; but with all he could do, "she prays for you," went thundering on through his heart, like the sound of the trump of the final day. He assisted his wife out of the saddle with more than usual politeness, and asked her if she was not weary, worn, and hungry. She was scarcely on the ground ere she had Samuel in her arms, and kissed him; and the little fellow, glad to have something unusual to tell her, said: "Father read your Bible to-day, and asked me what you did in that little room. And mother, he was in there, Oh! a long, long time."

His father, as if not to hear all this, was very busy removing the saddle, keeping his back upon this scene as much as he could, and closing his ears to the innocent tale of his little boy.

On his way to the barn, with his horse, he asked himself the meaning of all this, and whether, according to his own theory his time had not come for being a good man, "she prays for you," still ringing in his ears. He remained a long time in the barn, in the hope that he might so get the mastery over himself as to betray no uneasiness to his wife.

After some time little Sammy came running to the barn, and said: "Supper is ready; come, father." Both started off, and soon they were all together at

the table. They had scarcely commenced eating before he said:

"What kind of a sermon had you to-day?"

"An excellent sermon indeed," said his wife; "I did wish that you had been there to hear it."

"What was the text?" he asked.

"These are the words," said his wife, "but I have forgotten where they are found: 'The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion.' The minister told us who the ransomed of the Lord are, and described them as all returning to their final home; then he told us how safe and happy they will be."

"Did you have a good congregation?" he asked.

"Very good, and so many asked for you, and sent word for you to be sure to be there the next time there is preaching."

"When will that be?" he asked.

"In two weeks," was the reply.

Supper was over, and the sun was nearly down. This poor excited man began to feel more awful, and sitting much longer than he intended, his wife said to him, "I am weary, let us retire early."

"Well," said he, "any time."

His wife took little Sammy by the hand and led him into *that* little room. The man fled from the house, and as he fled, "she prays for you," roared through his ears as if it would dissolve his brain. When he returned, little Sammy, who was just ready to get into his trundle-bed, ran to him, and said: "Mother prayed for you again."

His father exclaimed, "May God save me!—that praying, oh!"

Soon all were in bed, but there was one troubled heart there, and just beside it there was another full of peace and consolation. No commotion within, for the smile of the Lord was the peace of her soul.

While one was quiet the other lay tossing and rolling about, as if the brain was racked with fever, or the nerves excited by strange irritation. While one was free from the vileness both of nature and practice, the other was in bondage to the accumulated evils of a whole lifetime of the most studied and wicked rebellion. But, "she prays for you," was a still small voice, a power next to omnipotence, which had scaled the high, and thick walls of his obdurate heart, and reached the very center of his soul, and was revolutionizing his whole being. The demon inhabitants were making a vigorous resistance, and a powerful effort to maintain their long-cherished position. But trembling and fearfulness said, but too plainly, that all was about to be lost, and that their place must soon become the habitation of another. In a few hours the burning horrors of the soul were seizing him with so much violence, that he would seek relief by waking his wife, and pouring into her ear the sad tale of his feverish heart.

"Mary! Mary!" said he, "wake up and do something for me, and try to help me."

"What is the matter?" said Mary, as if she had just aroused herself from a sound sleep, though she

had carefully marked every sigh, and every toss, "are you sick?"

"No, I am not sick," said he, "but I feel so strange, I can't sleep."

"Oh," said Mary, "you have not exercised any to-day, and perhaps slept some—you will feel better after a while."

"Perhaps so," said he, and turning over he seemed to make an effort to sleep; but this was only to be followed by deeper pangs, and more pungent and alarming fears, and turning round quickly and seizing his wife by the shoulder, said, "Mary, Mary do get up and do something for me, or I shall die."

"What does ail you?" asked Mary.

"I don't know," said he, "but I am afraid I'll die and be lost. Oh, I am so wicked that I fear I will never be saved."

● "You must not give up in that way," said Mary, "you know that the chief of sinners have been saved, and that salvation has been provided for the vilest of the vile."

"I know that," said the troubled man, "but I have been so wicked that I fear all is over with me; and then I have so often cursed you for wanting to go to church."

"Never mind that," replied Mary, "I am but a poor weak Christian, just look to your heavenly Father."

"If you are a poor Christian," said he, "what will become of thousands, and what will become of me?"

"You must change your course of life, and give your heart to God," said Mary, "and then all will be well."

"Will you pray for me, Mary?" asked he.

"I have been praying for you ever since our marriage."

"I know it," said he, "but will you pray for me now? I feel so badly, and if there is any mercy for me I want it now—just now, for I cannot live in this condition."

"I will do so most cheerfully," said Mary, "but you must pray for yourself."

Both got out of the bed, and there, in the dark and near midnight, both kneeled at the bed-side, and prayed for the down-lighting of the Divine mercy. Mary felt a confidence such as she had never realized before, amounting to the calmness of possession. Her husband freely and frankly confessed how great a sinner he was, and how little he deserved even the privilege of acknowledging himself as guilty before his Maker. Joining prayer to these confessions, his soul became deeply engaged for pardon. Rising from his knees, suddenly, he said: "Mary, let us go into the little room."

Mary followed, and soon both were engaged in prayer.

"Do you think, Mary," said he, "that God will save me—such a wretch, and so awfully wicked?"

"I do believe," said Mary, "that you will yet be

a happy man, and a good Christian, and go with me to the house of God."

After a long struggle, he rose up, and taking his seat on the chair near the little table, in the drawer of which he had found Mary's record of her Bible-reading, the day before, he said: "Mary, I feel better; I feel that I am a changed man—I know now that God can save the chief of sinners. I will never treat you as I have done, and I am very sorry that I did treat you so. Will you forgive me?"

How could Mary resist such humble entreaties? She always loved her husband. He was kind and affectionate, and very indulgent, except in religious matters.

"You have not offended me," said Mary. "God has been good to you in forgiving your sins, and this is all the reward I ask."

They both kneeled down and most heartily thanked Heaven for all the goodness and mercy that had fallen upon them; and rising up, they sang together the following lines:

"How happy are they,
Who their Saviour obey,
And have laid up their treasures above;
Tongue cannot express,
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Never were lines more appropriate, nor more sweetly sung, and never was a heart more grateful or fuller of real joy, than was the heart of this new-born man.

Mary was happy, too, but not excited. Her joy had the dignity of age, and the pressure of final conquest over a heart that she loved, and for whose cleansing she had long and most devoutly prayed. But it was near morning, and Mary had already heard the morning song of the birds, as if it were the echo of the purer song of angels, as they rejoiced over the penitence and safety of her husband. Her heart responded to every conceivable claim of gratitude, now she had accomplished, through grace, the cherished object of her whole married life, and was ready to say, "Now let the servant depart in peace."

She was anxious to know all about her husband's experience, and as soon as she could, she asked him when he began to feel the necessity of a change of heart.

"For only two or three days," was the reply. "I felt," said he, "on Saturday, that I was very cruel to you in not giving you a horse, every Sabbath, to go to church, and determined to be kind to you ever after, in this respect. And then—oh! I can't tell you how I felt on the Sabbath—I thought surely no man could be as miserable as I was. I asked Sammy what you did in that little room, and he told me you prayed for me. This nearly struck me into death. I thought how can she, when I am so wicked and cruel? And I thought surely there is something good in religion. And then again, I thought how kind and gentle you were, notwithstanding all my

wickedness to you, and neglect of your comfort in going to church."

"It is all over now," said Mary, "and we can enjoy ourselves on the Sabbath, reading the Bible, and going to church, and then, every morning and evening, we can have prayers in our family. This will strengthen us in religion, and be such a help to keep Sammy from being a bad and wicked boy."

"Well," said he, "I will read the Bible if you will pray."

"I will do so," said Mary, "for a while, but the sooner you begin the better for you, if you can only say a few words."

"I know it," said he, "but it is a new and strange work, and I fear I cannot do it."

"Just try," said Mary, "and you will do better than you think you will, and always remember that mere words and sentences are not prayer—it is the heart:

" 'Tis prayer supports the soul that's weak ;
Though thought be broken, language lame,
Pray if thou canst, or canst not speak ;
But pray with faith in Jesus' name.
Depend on him ; thou canst not fail ;
Make all thy wants and wishes known ;
Fear not ; his merits must prevail :
Ask but in faith, it shall be done."

"I will try," said he, "and if I fail you must help me."

The next thing of great importance was to join the church. This was thought to be essential, in order

not only to enjoy the instruction of the pulpit, but to profit by the ordinances of God's house.

Mary said this step ought to be taken without delay, but first of all, they should determine which church they would unite with, saying, at the same time, that, as she knew her husband's aversion to the Methodists, she would go with him to any other orthodox and spiritual branch of the church he might select.

"Mary," said he, "you know I never could see that class meetings could be made a test of membership, nor do I see how they can be useful in building up Christians in the doctrines of religion. The class leaders are generally very ignorant men, and depend more on excitement than on real solid instruction. And beside this, I am not in favor of so many changes among the ministers, and so many protracted meetings, and so much noise."

"I know this," said Mary, "and that you have been brought up a Baptist; but what will you do? there are no Baptists near us, and no church in the whole county, and beside this, I am afraid I could not believe in immersion as the only baptism, and in that other rule they have concerning close communion."

"Well," said he, "I know all this, and far be it from me to ask too much of you. You were brought up a Presbyterian, and there is a good church near us, within five miles, and they have a good preacher, I am told, and what do you say about going there?"

"I am agreed to this," said Mary, "and had hoped all along that if you should change your life, you would unite with that church. I will, if you say so, get my letter, and go with you."

"We will go there next Sabbath and see how we like it, and form acquaintances among the elders, and with the minister," said he.

It was all right. Mary happened to know one of the elders, and had an opportunity of sending him word that she wished to see him.

In a few days the elder came, and found, to the great joy of his heart, that God had changed one who was supposed to defy all religious influence, and that he, with his wife wished to unite with the church. After words of encouragement and prayer, he left.

"How did you like Mr. —?" said Mary to her husband.

"Very well indeed; I think him a good man, and if they are all like him, I know we will be happy among them."

Next Sabbath both were at church in good time, and arrangements were made to unite with it at the next communion — in two weeks. The union was made, and Mary and her husband lived happy and useful.

CHAPTER XXII.

The last Appointment—Retirement from the Ministry.

MR. MASON'S health had so far recovered that himself and friends were greatly encouraged, and entertained the hope that he might yet live long and be useful, as in former years. His church relations, for a year past, were pleasant. No difficulties, of a very serious nature, had occurred, and he had made many fast and valuable friends.

At the proper time he went to Conference, full of cheerfulness, and elastic with the hope of getting such an appointment as would continue to relieve his mind, and improve his health. But how vain are the hopes of man, and how uncertain is everything human! Two or three churches, either of which would have suited, and all of which had sent a request for his appointment, with himself were disappointed.

The ground taken was, that if he was sent to one, the others would be offended, and therefore he was sent to neither of them. But in place of this, he was sent to a church at the most remote point of the Conference, and where the people were never known to pay anything like an adequate support. The books showed that they owed the ministers, in balances due them from the adopted estimates of their committees, during a period of eleven years,

near thirteen hundred dollars. If the church had been poor, the matter would have been less difficult to endure; but it was one of the wealthy little churches. It had two men ~~in~~ it supposed to be worth a hundred thousand dollars each; and beside all this, it was in an unhealthy location, and very difficult of access. There was no way to get goods there but by wagons, and over very rough roads.

Mr. Mason determined to try it and do the best he could. All things were packed up in due time, and put into one large wagon, and part of the price of transportation paid before the wagon left.

The next thing was to secure a passage in the stage for himself and family, as far as the stage route reached, in the direction of his new home. He found that he could go only about eighty miles in this way, and must then look out for some other means of conveyance for the next sixty miles. Trusting in Providence, they left the next morning at four o'clock, and after ~~traveling~~ traveling all day, and part of the night in a crowded coach, over rough roads, they were safely landed at a small country hotel, in a very rough region of the country.

They found the house very neat and comfortable, though intensely warm. Next morning they felt so much fatigued, and so sore from their stage-riding, that they concluded to remain over that day, and, if possible, secure some comfortable means of conveying them to ——. After all Mr. Mason could do, he

could find nothing better than a common two-horse Yankee wagon. The owner of it was going to —, and told Mr. Mason if he was willing to go with him, he would be glad to take him and his family free of charge.

After Mrs. Mason was consulted, all agreed to go in the wagon if they could get one or two umbrellas, and a chair for Mrs. Mason to sit on. The umbrellas were very kindly loaned by the proprietor of the hotel, to be returned by the wagon, and Mr. Mason easily got a split-bottom chair, for which he paid seventy cents.

All started, and after jolting and thumping all that day and most of the next, they arrived, tired and bruised, at their future home. And, like all other small villages, it was open to the gaze of all, and what one man knew, all knew, and what was the business of one family, was the business of all the rest.

It was soon known that the new preacher had "cum," and it was known just as soon *how* he "cum." Some of the *would-be's*, who would never think of generous kindness, nor of meeting their minister half way with a carriage, to bring him along comfortably, and as they thought respectably, wondered that they "cum" in that nasty old wagon. Others said, they can't be much or they would not have mortified us so by coming in such a mean way.

But all this by the way. The next thing was the house to live in. The steward took Mr. Mason to a very neat, comfortable and convenient little

parsonage—the best that he had seen for a long while. He returned delighted, and gave his wife a description of it, and they both congratulated themselves on being so comfortable.

In due time the goods arrived, and were unloaded in the parsonage yard. Next day they were unpacked, and in a short time everything was in its place, and housekeeping fairly commenced.

In due time one of the *would-be's*, and her daughter, called to see the preacher and his family. They were scarcely seated before the daughter said: "La! mammy, what a nice carpet. Is that imported, Mrs. Mason?"

"No," said Mrs. Mason, "that was manufactured in New England."

"New Anglan'. Whar's that?" inquired the young lady. And just then, she saw a peculiar sort of pincushion on a stand. Springing up and running to it, she grabbed it in her hand and exclaimed, with eyes wide open, "La! mammy, did iver ye see the likes o' that?"

"Oh, sit down, Sally," said her mother, "you are always so 'curi's,'" and turning to Mrs. Mason, she said: "I niver seed sich a gal as Sally—she's al'ays noticin' little things."

After spending some half hour, this old lady and "curi's" daughter left. But this was only to give place to another of a different stripe. She came in a carriage of rather an antiquated shape, but it was a carriage; at least that was what the good sister

called it some ten or a dozen times during her call. She was very glad to see Mrs. Mason, just to tell her that the parsonage was a very nice little house, and that her husband had paid so much for the building of it, and that it ought to be kept very nice.

"Several of our preachers' wives," said she, "were not nice and they abused it very much, and we had so much trouble to get it in good order. But our last preacher's wife was very neat."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Mason, "I have kept house for several years, and think I understand it pretty well."

"Oh yes," said the good sister, "you are from the city, and of course, know all about it."

"There are just as good housekeepers out of the city as in it," said Mrs. Mason, intending to flatter her visitor a little, she being one of the persons that had never lived in a city.

"They tell me," said she, "that you came here in a wagon, and I was so sorry; for if I had known it I would have sent our carriage for you."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Mason, "we got along very well — perhaps much better than in a carriage, over those rough roads."

"Well," as she rose to start, "you can have our carriage just when you want, and I will come down, some day, and take you out riding."

As soon as she left, Mrs. Mason said "she never expected to be in that carriage, for she had seen just such persons before—always talking about their

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mr. Mason on a Farm.

THE small amount coming to Mrs. Mason, from her father's estate, together with a small amount that fell to Mr. Mason, by the death of one of his brothers, had been given to a friend to invest in land in the West.

This investment was made very wisely, and the land grew into value, and had been cultivated for three years by a tenant, for certain improvements. This tenant proved to be a good farmer, and had been able to save a little money.

Mr. Mason proposed to him, that if he would put him up a small house, and furnish him with what he needed, from the farm, he might remain on it for four years more.

This was agreed to, and the house was soon ready for occupancy.

Mr. Mason had been there but a short time before he was called upon to preach regularly in a union meeting-house, in the neighborhood, with a pledge of five hundred dollars a year.

This call was accepted, and Mr. Mason still found himself doing some good to his fellow-beings by dispensing to them the word of life.

Mr. Mason preached to this free congregation, for nearly four years, at the expiration of which time,

the community were willing to convey the church property to one single denomination; and Mr. Mason entered more largely, and successfully into farming operations—finally it was thought best to rent out the farm, and go to some place where there were more advantages of society, and where Mr. Mason could give himself up to literary pursuits more fully. The change was made, and now, in his advanced years Mr. Mason is enjoying not only the ease, but the sweets of life; and as he is ripening in years, he is ripening in knowledge.

In this rapid sketch, scenes and characters have been grouped together, and taken as they are, allowing, whatever of deduction is necessary to make the scenes and characters, realities to the inexperienced. They seem to illustrate more or less of the facts within the observation of every pioneer itinerant.

There is no fiction in what are brought out as facts. Real occurrences and thoughts are set forth, as received from certain stand-points; and especially is there reality in the life-scenes, and the discussions about rules and usages.

It is a fact within the observation of many, that much excitement prevails as to the oppressive and despotic and unphilosophical character of many of the rules and laws before illustrated. Just in proportion as the people investigate, and enlarge the circle of their observation, just in that proportion do they ask for a reason for this, and for that and for the other. Blind devotion to what this man or that,

said or did, is passing away, and while many are saying and doing but little for reform, rather than disturb a part or the whole, still the inquiry comes very often. Why is it thus? Changes must be wrought, or there will be a general revolution, and the like.

But the press is guarded, and no man can speak through it unless he can pronounce the *Sibboleth*, exactly as it suits the ears, and the prejudice of its legal overseers; and if one of these should step over the prescribed line, and suffer the oppressed, and the thinking to speak, and ask for the rights which are natural to them, and to the body at large, he is either dismissed as unworthy, or put in such a place as to preclude the possibility of his enlarged and intelligent liberality doing any harm.

Foreignisms of this kind, cannot be either kindly, or long endured by the free and independent life of Americans. Public teachers are becoming scarce, and many that could be useful are compelled to retire either for want of sustenance, or because of oppression. They see what is a fact in all history, that when oppressive laws are in the hands of the ignorant and selfish, the people must suffer. And they see too, that this is modified only by an appeal to "our fathers," in the past, and to the credulity of their sons in the present. Retirement from activity, under a government of such unreasonable claims, is the only asylum for the sensitive, and the only relief from continued, but unavailing dissatisfaction.

Mr. Mason was as devoted to the cause as sensible men are generally to the cause they espouse; but the workings of the system, the continued breaking up of endearing relations, the uncertainty of anything permanent beyond a single year, and the rule of masters, and sub-masters, and, sometimes, a sub to the sub, all combined into one chain of power, alienated his heart, and drove him into the more desirable relations of a settled home in the walks of private life. From this permanent home, he can look out upon the past history of his itineracy, and upon a thousand evidences of kindness and tender sympathy, with sentiments of deepest gratitude. Outside of the professed Christian inclosures, he can look upon warm hearts, and remember the many acts of generous liberality and kindness, as he does those of his parental home. And inside, he sees much of interest, and much that promises temporary usefulness, and, if properly managed, future good, and future felicity.

THE END

H.G.







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taken from the Building**

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